EXPLORING MULTIMODAL COMPOSING:

A TECHNO-PEDAGOGICAL STUDY

By

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For all their advice, support, tough love, and caring in a multitude of ways I would like to thank the following people:

My committee members:
> Dr. Ronald C. Brooks, Dr. Rebecca Damron, Dr. An Cheng, and Dr. Karen High; you listened, advised, and challenged – and for that I thank you very much.

My other educational and scholarly mentors:
> Jan Brodersen, Dr. Chris Anderson, Amy Fleener, Dr. Kevin Kienholz, Dana Hatter, Dr. Brian Watson, and the DMAC 2011 Crew (Dr. Cindy Selfe, Dr. Cheryl Ball, Dr. Scott DeWitt, and R. Trauman); you are the shining standards of patience and professionalism that I hold myself to. You have touched my life more than you know.

My fellow colleagues and collaborators:
> Rachel Ryerson, Phillip Heasley, Kim Dyer, Lori Raborg, Lynn Hughes, David Schaap, Errick Braggs, Clint Clausing, and Ed Kirtley; all of whom gave me the advice and support I needed at just the right time to keep going.

My Writing Group Guru:
> Melody Denny; without whom I would have never begun, let alone finished! I am indebted to your commitment to keeping the process going.

My friend and trainer:
> Gena Wollenberg; you taught me the secrets of endurance through marathon and triathlon training…but really gave me skills to finish **this** race.

My family of choice and all the other friends too numerous to list:
> You pushed, prodded, and encouraged me to finish, even though you thought I was crazy to **still** be in school.

My family of birth:
> My grandma, aunts, and uncles who have always supported my educational accomplishments with words of encouragement.

My parents:
> Marlena, Tom, and Dale; all of whom taught me the value of balancing *book learning* and *common sense* in a way that has helped me to come this far.

My Trio of Troublemakers:
> My sisters, Angela and Daisy, and my cousin, Erika; who each continually challenge me to be the best example of a strong, independent, intelligent, woman I can be.

Name: ELKIE BURNSIDE

Date of Degree: MAY, 2013

Title of Study: EXPLORING MULTIMODAL COMPOSING:
                A TECHO-PEDAGOGICAL STUDY

Major Field: ENGLISH

Abstract:
This multimodal (also called *digitally borne*) text explores the variety of ways technology and multimodal compositions can be incorporated into classroom and work experience. Lessons learned are examined in the context of developing a new understanding of multimodal composition through praxis and the framework of teaching others.

Chapter 1 both introduces the importance of exploring multimodal composing methods and explicates both the historical and theoretical overview of multimodal composition pedagogy and practices that act as the foundation for this project. Chapter 2 examines two assignments used in a first year composition course as a way to incorporate multimodal composing into the classroom. The first is a rhetorical analysis of a music video and the second is an evaluative web text. Chapter 3 describes a public service announcement assignment sequence, which culminates in a web portfolio, used in a Technical Writing course. Chapter 4 surveys the impact of visual rhetorical principles on instructional PowerPoint® presentations for firefighter training. Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion of the broad themes found in the experiences of designing and executing these composing situations and how these lessons can be applied in further instructional practice.

Ultimately the text advocates that composing multimodally impacts not only academic but technical training environments in such a way that to ignore these methods of instruction puts students at a disadvantage in future composing situations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Culture changes, and if composition's role is to help students acquire the skills to live a critically engaged life—that is, to identify problems, to solve them, and to communicate with others about them—then we need to expand our view of writing instruction to include the diverse media forms that actually represent and shape the discursive reality of students. The verbal bias, then, reveals two closely interwoven perils: a political one that reinscribes a conclusion-based rationality, and a rhetorical one that ignores the possibility that different media function more or less effectively in different contexts, yet both can, and most often should, work together to achieve rhetorical effects. (Williams, 2001 I, p. 25)

That we have restricted composition and rhetoric to the alphabet and to words is too bad, and has limited us. Now we have the opportunity to open things up and be more inclusive. (Hart-Davidson and Krause, 2004, p. 156)

There is a tendency among student writers (and even some professionals) to view their written text as primary and their graphics as merely decorative add-ons. This erroneous view can lead to poorly hastily constructed graphics but also to poorly constructed text as well. When analyzing hybrid texts and constructing them with our students, we need to constantly remind ourselves that images, as much as text, can be analyzed rhetorically, can be connotative, for instance, in addition to being denotative. (Amare and Manning, 2007, p. 57)

Multimodal Composition: Why Should Instructors Care?

These three quotations stand out in a field of scholarship on multimodal composition for very different reasons. Collectively each works to show the importance of considering how multimodal composing (using a combination of alphabetic text, sounds, images, and other media) can add to the field of Composition and Rhetoric, both as a scholarly practice and in practical application for students. Individually these ideas help highlight the shifting focus of an academic discipline, a historical overview of which will be traced later in this project. These three quotations also help to highlight the potentially divisive nature that multimodal composing can cause instructors and scholars in many fields to adopt. Because the concept of multimodal composition is not restricted to a single field of research, the authors of these quotations help focus in on the aspects of multimodal composition most relevant to this project.

Williams' assertion is the strongest among these claims about the future of multimodal composing. His prediction of a cultural shift calls into question what he and other scholars term a *bias* in favor of alphabetic composition practices. He articulates that if the role of composition studies is indeed to help students become critically aware, then this will require a different approach to the verbal/visual divide that currently exists in the field. The assertion that media can, at times, function to communicate more effectively than text alone is a striking one that appears to be gaining more and more acceptance by practitioners in the discipline of composition studies. This is one aspect at the heart of why multimodal composing should be considered by authors and those who teach courses centered on composing. On the one hand, Williams' critical assessment of a verbal bias may work to alienate scholars and practitioners seeking to learn more about this field. However, his claim will ring true for those already invested in using multimodal composing practices in a variety of ways. This dual view of the impact of multimodal composing

on writing based disciplines continues in Hart-Davidson and Krause's critique of writing courses.

Although brief, their statement succinctly sums up one position on the restriction of writing courses to alphabetic works only, that it really is **too bad**. The focus of this assertion is centered on the possibility offered by multimodal composing to change the restricted nature of composition studies. This claim is an important building block for this project. Hart-Davidson and Krause acknowledge that scholars who want to find different ways to enrich educational experiences can shift from focusing on written discourse as primary to other methods that allow more diverse content and composing methods into the classroom and other instructional environments. It should be acknowledged that this statement can create a dissonance for practitioners in disciplines focused on the teaching of written discourse. However, as I explore in-depth in later chapters, the restriction of mode can operate against the goals of writing courses – which is typically to teach students how to communicate effectively with the tools at hand. The crucial aspect of this claim is that the tools at hand may no longer be solely alphabetic. The importance of balancing both alphabetic and multimodal composing will be investigated more completely in later chapters, helping to bring into focus why alphabetic composition is only one aspect of composing in today's classrooms.

In the final statement, Amare and Manning focus on one issue that could arise as instructors begin to include multimodal content in their classrooms. The notion that alphabetic text is the primary mode of communicating and that graphics are merely decorations highlights a critical concept that the incorporation of multimodal texts creates; in this case the authors acknowledge that there is a need for new instruction about multimodal methods of composing. By noting that images and graphics are not merely additions, but can be purposeful aspects of

communicating a message, these and other scholars in the field open up new avenues of instruction and scholarship ripe for investigation. It is in this new and growing area that my dissertation functions. While bringing notions regarding design and graphics into a composing classroom can create dissonance, I will explore in the following sections how this can be a productive tension.

The purpose of this current project is to demonstrate how some of the principles of multimodal composing can be enacted in instructional and professional environments. Hart-Davidson and Krause (2004) predict that the sub-discipline of computers and writing will cease to be different from the larger field of composition rhetoric because "all composition specialists shall be expected to understand the importance of using computers and other technologies to teach writing" (p. 147). While this may seem to be an outlandish statement to some, the reality is that this field has taken a turn toward examining how computers and other digital technologies influence writing and other compositional practices. Academic peer-reviewed journals such as *Kairos: Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*; *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*; and *Computers and Composition Online* all demonstrate the growing interest and acceptance in academic circles of the topics most relevant to the research area termed *digital rhetoric* or *digital humanities*. In addition, the Utah State University Press has established the Computers and Composition Digital Press. While the press is open to traditional eBooks (that can be published either in print or digitally) they express a preference for "digital projects that cannot be printed on paper, but that have the same intellectual heft as a book." ("Mission and Goals," n.d.). Scholars assert that the content of these texts, which are sometimes called *digitally borne*, is intended to be read in a multimedia environment. This type of design

requires acknowledging that some content requires specific delivery modes to be, in the author's opinion, the most effective way of communicating that message.

The intent of this project is **not** to claim that every composing task requires this type of multimodal composition. Central to my interest in the use of digital rhetoric and multimodal composing is the notion that incorporating any new use of technology into the instructional environment must be based on a specific purpose, and not simply be incorporated to try the newest technological object. As Hart-Davidson and Krause (2004) state "part of paying attention –thank you for the enduring anthem, Cindy Selfe (1999)—means knowing when not to use computer technologies" (p. 157). To be an informed practitioner in the field of composition and rhetoric, one cannot simply ignore the influx of approaches to teaching writing that focus on incorporating technology or multimodal composing in some fashion (See the works of Palmeri, 2012; Shipka, 2011; Wysocki, 2004; Sidler, Morris, and Smith, 2008; C. Selfe, 2007 for more in-depth discussions of the varied approaches). An important distinction to make is that not all multimodal composing is digital or influenced by technology. The work in this project is focused on digital multimodal composing. The list of approaches and uses for technology in the classroom is very extensive. Thus the purpose of this work is also **not** focused on trying to define every possible way that multimodal composition can be used in the classroom. To adequately discuss this would require several books (both traditional and digitally borne).

Instead the focus of this project will be to consider the power of including multimodal composing as an **option** for various composing tasks. Kostelnick (1989) predicts that "to communicate effectively in their disciplines, technical writing students need to learn how to combine visual and verbal strategies in solving rhetorical problems" (p. 77). However my project extends that prediction to students of all fields, not just technical writers. Technology has now

attained the role of a pervasive force in daily life so much that portions of student populations are often referred to as *digital natives*. Prensky (2001) posits that the thinking patterns of students that have "spent their entire lives surrounded by and using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the other toys and tools of the digital age" (p. 1) have changed from those of previous generations. His early work helped introduce the use of the terms *digital natives* and *digital immigrants*[1] and the implications that this distinction can create for those seeking to incorporate multimodal composing into composing situations. These early claims by Prensky have been complicated more and more as issues of access and technological privilege begin to circulate. Using the digital native/immigrant lens may create false assumptions about student populations. Instructors cannot simply assume a student is technologically (and/or digitally) savvy simply based on age. Young does not automatically mean digitally adept, nor does mature mean digitally inept. The implications of how issues of access to technology can influence the dividing lines between technological experience and levels of comfort with multimodal practices in composing are important. Kennedy, et al (2008) find that student experiences within a single year show the potential for a digital divide (p. 117). In other words, instructors cannot simply assume that all students in a classroom have the same level of experience and comfort with technology. One such issue is that a classroom may be filled with non-traditional students, students that grew up in technologically sparse areas, or students that grew up in cultures that limit technological access. While these students may look like digital natives…they do not have the same skill or familiarity with which to use technological tools for composing.

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[1] "Those who were not born into the digital world but have, at some point later in our lives, become fascinated by and adopted may or most aspects of new technology" (Prensky, 2001, pp. 1-2)

Not only does the work of Kennedy, et al pinpoint flaws in an overly simplistic view of digital native/immigrant divisions, Prensky (2009) himself modifies his position in later work to allow that older users may become digital natives. The research of others like Bayne and Ross (2007) and Bennett and Maton (2010) provide further information that shows how highly complex these relationships can be.

While not the main focus of my own project, the concerns for addressing any digital divides within the classroom has influenced my current project in that I want to raise the question: what can be done for students who do not have technological access or aptitude? A team of scholars, C. Selfe, DeWitt, Ball, and Trauman (2001), demonstrate a model (in a yearly workshop sponsored by The Ohio State University) that one solution to this issue is to allow students to choose the delivery method most appropriate for the assignment. Ball (2012) writes:

> As editor of Kairos [an online peer-reviewed multimodal scholarly journal], I see on an everyday basis how form and content are inseparable in authors' scholarly multimedia – an important concept for students to learn and practice in an age when multimedia is ubiquitous. (n.p.)

Therefore the purpose of this current project is to interrogate how this concept and other principles drawn from the body of scholarship focused on multimodal composition are applied in instructional environments. Borne out of the theories investigating the practices of digital multimodal composing is this series of narratives, each of which is an examination of how one instructor's teaching practices are influenced by digital rhetoric and the principles of multimodal composition. The use of narrative as a research method is explored in more depth later in this introduction.

The Draw of Multimodality for This Instructor

There are many threads that I could examine along the journey that has led to my interest in the ways that multimodal composing practices can impact a classroom. At times I am amazed at how many different twists and turns my teaching career has taken. I am not sure that I can pinpoint the beginning of my love relationship with writing, but I do know that I am aware I am not alone in my appreciation and fascination of this skill. While the structure of a project like this requires drawing on the scholarly work of other academics, I cannot ignore the influence of my own love affair with writing and technology on the teaching practices explored in this and the following chapters.

My Own Early Multimodal Influences

The best place to start any examination of how my own instructional practice has reached this point is probably in my own writing, which was heavily influenced in its early stages by digital multimodality. As a high school student I spent hours and hours slaving away in the dank basement of the old Dodge City (KS) High School journalism classroom. What began as a quick way to fulfill an elective credit really ended up as a way of identifying with my first social group as an adolescent by accident (instead of choice, the way that I identified with church, family, and the 'gifted' students that made up my social circles). Looking back now I have NO idea why I liked journalism so much, it was the first class I cried in. I remember the student teacher for my class asking me something that I could not answer. When she continued to press me, I panicked at the thought that I might not know the answer to something…which caused tears to trickle down my cheeks, building slowly until finally I left the classroom sobbing. Now I laugh, I have no idea what she asked, but I do remember I **DID NOT** want that feeling of dread to happen to me ever again.

The student teacher left and my 'real teacher' Mrs. Wipf came back into the classroom

and I just remember blossoming under her direction. I really liked asking people questions and

writing, but more than anything, I really loved watching my ideas go from chicken scratchings

on paper, to the mock-up on the computer, to the printed form of a yearbook (which was the staff

I decided to work on). I think about the permanence of that kind of communication, knowing that

the yearbook is intended to stay as a piece of the past, a memento of that year for whoever

encounters it. I have worked on seven different yearbooks since then, both as a staff member and

an advisor, and that sense of fun and excitement is still with me. Watching that transformation

from print to digital and back to print was important to me and in many ways put me on the path

to want to learn more about this digital composing phenomena that is at the heart of this project.

Multimodal Composing In Secondary Classrooms

In addition to these personal encounters with writing and multimodal composing, I can also draw

on my early experiences as an instructor. The narratives that comprise the following sections

help explore more completely the connections I made from these early experiences with

composing in multiple modes. However, it was not simply my interest in multimodal composing

that pushed me toward these instructional and composing situations. I was also influenced by a

desire to use my classroom as a productive space, both for my students and myself as an

instructor. In my career as a teacher and student I have learned about service learning, themed

courses, and linked sections of first year composition…all ideas that were discussed at previous

institutions, but in those places I was never really allowed to explore how to execute these

instructional approaches. By investigating more what these types of classrooms **could** be like, I

discovered I want to be a writing teacher that focuses on writing practices that could transfer to

academic, professional, and other practical applications. I decided I did not want to be a teacher

who focuses on film or literature through the lens of composing. Not that these things are bad, they are just not the way I want to approach the discipline of writing. *(Funny, I say writing…and that is what I am typing, but in my head I want to switch it to composing…but I can't, I wasn't at that point just yet.)* Reflecting back allows me realize that I wanted to consider the intricacies of how students write as much as to concentrate on what they wrote about.

Thus the kernel of my dissertation began as I encountered and considered how to apply the theoretical scholarship on the topic of how one goes about 'teaching writing.' There is no shortage of conversations, academic and otherwise, about what the best way to 'do' that is. It was during this exploration of various methods for teaching about writing I also became more aware of the role an instructor can play as a participant/researcher. While learning from the classroom is something I had always done – encountering the concept of narrative helped deepen my understanding of this part of teaching.

Using Narrative for Investigation

Using narrative as evidence in research is not new to the area of Composition and Rhetoric. The use of the literacy narrative has a long history in the field. The term literacy narrative was first used to refer to autobiographical writing such as "Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* and Mike Rose's Lives on the Boundary, or novels, plays, and films 'that foreground issues of language acquisition and literacy'" (Eldred & Mortensen, 1992, p. 513, cited in Soliday, 1994). These early writings centered on ways to pinpoint and record the variables that form writing practices and writer identities. Other early uses of literacy narratives included gathering data for teacher research (Rose, 1989) to create relevant writing pedagogy and as a source of ethnographic studies in which reflection was not completed by the subject but rather the researcher (Heath, 1983; Herrington and Curtis, 2000).

In Brandt's *Literacy in American Lives*, she defines literacy narratives more closely as narratives rooted in the in the perspective of the individual subject (the author of the stories about literacy), and more sharply attentive to social, political, and economic factors that extend beyond the community of study (2001). Brandt frames the methodology of a literacy narrative around two central concepts: the literacy sponsor and the economics of literacy. In her framework literacy sponsors are "delivery systems for the economics of literacy, the means by which these forces present themselves to—and through—individual learners...[and] the causes to which people's literacy usually gets recruited" (p. 19). This systematic approach to understanding and using narrative as a methodology is significant because it presents a framework through which researchers can examine practices that influence the storyteller over time.

More recently, these concepts were re-imagined in C. Selfe and Hawisher's (2004) *Literate Lives in the Information Age*. The authors added to Brandt's research method the concept that literacy sponsors include entities or individuals who "enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress or withhold literacy whether or not they benefit from sponsorship" (p. 5). These Selfe and Hawisher also developed the term "technology gateway" which refers to "places and situations where participants gain the technological access that allow them to pursue digital literacies" (p. 5). The influence of their work can be seen in the proliferation of technology literacy narratives as in-class assignments, as a part of graduate cumulative projects (Chandler and Scenters-Zapico, 2012), online journals, and the digital production of scholarly works at the C&W digital press. However, this is not the only application of narrative in academic study.

Another approach for using narrative in research is that of narrative inquiry. The goal of this method, much like that of literacy narrative, is to communicate the meanings of experiences

as told by a storyteller. Through the stories told, readers can gain an understanding of the lived experience and both the storyteller and reader can construct appropriate strategies to meet, in this case, instructional goals relating to multimodal composition.

Early theory about this method proposed that narrative research helps to construct meaning because stories "have the power to help define who we are, to foster growth and development, and to help us envision our possible futures" (Lambert, et al., 1995, p. 7). As an instructor, one of my main goals is to create an environment of growth and development for both my students and myself in the classroom. One way to allow for this is by using narrative inquiry as a way to examine my own pedagogical practice. This means that not only can I learn through my own reflection, but other instructors can also gain from my narrative. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), the act of telling a story to another is a phenomenon. It is the storyteller that selects what part of an experience to communicate and in what way those pieces should be told; and through this transaction, meaning is given to experience. All of the knowledge and experiences in the life of participant-researcher shapes their pedagogy and teaching practice (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009). Because these personal stories shape professional practice, both are within the purview of the narrative researcher. By selecting narrative as the way to communicate my own experiences with multimodal composing, meaning can be created for both me and others.

Because meaning is created through analysis and interpretation, understanding is ultimately reached through perspectives of the participant (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), while the final interpretation is left to the reader. In other words, as I share my experiences with readers, they will take the artifacts presented and in turn use them to create meaning for their own instructional practices. To explore how this interaction functions, Connelly and Clandinin (1990)

posit that a person is, at once, engaged in living, telling, retelling, and reliving stories (p. 4). In later research these and other authors (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Clandinin, Huber, Huber, Murphy, Orr, Pearce, & Steeves, 2006) create a theory based on a three-dimensional space for understanding and conducting narrative inquiry that incorporates the temporal (past, present, and future), the personal and social (interaction), and the contextual (situation and place). Narrative inquiry is a useful tool for participant-researchers (like me in this case) because it allows researchers the ability to locate themselves in this space and trace the often non-linear story that exists in the narrative. In the narratives that follow I examine these dimensions through the lens of the frame experiment, explained in detail below.

Another benefit for participant-researchers is that narrative inquiry is not a static method of inquiry (Schwab, 1960/1978; Connelly & Clandinin, 2005), and is not limited to specific time, motion, and space. This method allows the storyteller to understand the experience by following where the story goes (Craig, 2007). Because of this fluidity, it may not be possible to name the phenomena being explored until the end of the narrative. This aspect fits well with a project like this project because it allows an emphasis on deductive conclusions, a strategy favored in academic discourse.

It should be acknowledged that the use of personal narrative as a research method is often seen as an unusual choice in many fields of research. This method has been indicted as being "…soft. Others think it is touchy-feel. Still others call it easy. A few think it is anti-intellectual. Some question its reliability and validity" (Nash, 2004, p. 4). However, in addition to the work mentioned previously, two recent scholars have specifically explored the use of personal writing in academic discourse. Nash is one of these scholars, his exploration looks at the benefits of what he terms Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN). As part of his work, the author interrogates the

meaning of the word scholarship. He concludes that a scholar is one who has the time to play

with and explore new ideas (2004, p. 42). This is a unique perspective on the day-to-day rush I

can see other scholars participating in. However, the addition of this notion of exploration added

to my understanding of the use of narrative by bringing to light the focus of my own instructional

exploration with multimodal composing in various environments. As I was acquainted with the

role of participant-researcher, narrative is a logical choice to explore the lessons learned as I

reflected on the concepts found in my own composition and instructional environments.

In addition to this work, Speigelman (2004) also explores the ways that personal

academic writing is beginning to shape scholarly practice. Spigelman explicates the various

notions that surround this approach, including the use of personal as evidence in academic

scholarship. She acknowledges that "although extended personal narratives generally do not

appear in academic articles, scholarly writers are starting to appropriate the rich possibilities of

detail and multiple perspectives characteristic of such writing" (2004, p. 4). This approach to

narrative theory also functions to bridge together the various instructional and composition

environments that are the focus on this project. Narrative allows the storyteller to operate outside

of linear time to reflect and learn from past experience. Because this project is a cumulative

examination of several different composing situations, this method offered me a specific

approach to use for this project.

In their scholarship Nash and Spigelman both offer constructive guidelines for authors

attempting to write in this type of academic style. Examining these brought to mind the concept

of teacher/researcher that I had seen modeled throughout my academic career. Earlier

pedagogical instruction had brought me into contact with Hillocks' (1995) notion of reflection as

a part of teaching practice. He states:

A reflective practitioner will analyze a new idea in light of its appropriateness to the students and their present knowledge; its fit with available theory, experience, and the goals of teaching; and its probability for success as judged from the teacher's experience and knowledge. (p. 37)

This viewpoint only further reinforces the work of other scholars regarding the use of narrative and began to help shape the direction of this project.

While exploring the guidelines outlined by Nash and Spiegelman through the lens of what can be gained by reflection during instruction, I began to see a focus for the disparate instructional and practical environments I inhabited. I was an author of my own scholarly work, an editor of the multimodal work of others, and an instructor in both the first year composition and technical writing classrooms. In addition to these roles, I was also a technical writer in a professional writing environment (a technical manual publishing house). Initially my role was as editor and proofreader of technical information, but over time this role grew into shaping the instructional documents that accompanied these firefighting manuals. It was in this conjunction of literacy narratives, narrative inquiry, and separate composing environments that the project before you began to take shape.

Frame Experiments

As the purpose of this project is to explore ways that multimodal composition and rhetorical awareness of multimodal design can be enacted in the classroom, I chose to further narrow the objects examined in the narrative structure by using the lens of a practice termed the *frame experiment* by Schon. He asserts that this framework is a way in which researchers can "impose a kind of coherence on messy situations and thereby discover consequences and implications of

their chosen frames" (Schon, p 157 – qtd in Hillocks, 1995, p. 32). In this theoretical framework there are six dimensions, defined as follows:

1) Analyzing current student progress in relation to general course goals

2) Positing some change or range of possible changes sought in the writing of students

3) Selecting or devising a teaching strategy or set of strategies to implement the desired change

4) Devising a plan for implementing the teaching strategies

5) Assessing the impact of the teaching strategy in order to 'discover consequences and implications of [the] chosen frames'

6) Confirmation or change of the strategies used (Hillocks, 1995, p. 33)

The chapters that follow will trace the development of multimodal influence in my own pedagogical practice in two academic classroom situations and in a technical training environment. Each of these environments presented a variety of artifacts that could be included for examination in each narrative. As a part of the narrative process I began to make decisions about what to base my narrative examinations on. In this process I considered the various aspects of each environment (i.e. student reactions and reflections, customer input, internal staff training needs, etc.). Each of these interactions could be potential data points that would contribute to the instructional aspect of the narrative. However, in the end, I decided to focus on the composing tasks set before the author/creators as the basis for these narratives.

This decision was made for several reasons. The first is that each situation (FYC, Tech Writing, and Tech Training) presented such disparate settings that it would have been difficult to keep consistent the many variables that exist in each. By selecting the one aspect in all three composing situations I had consistent input over, the knowledge created through the experience

and examined in the following narratives have the potential for being more generalizable (as opposed to conclusions based on aspects of the situation that varied widely from situation to situation).

This approach also falls in line with Connelly and Clandinin's (2000) assertion that "The final story must fit the events while at the same time bringing an order and meaningfulness that was not necessarily apparent in the event as it happened" (p. 15). Bringing to light the second reason the composing task is used as the main instrument in each of the following narratives, which is as a direct result of applying the steps of the frame experiment. The tasks (either assignment sheets for the classroom or style guide and user videos for technical training) are the aspect of each narrative that resulted from applying steps one through four. At the end of this series of steps, the composing task was what needed to be applied in order to learn if multimodal composing could successfully be used in that situation. It is for this reason that I use the composing task as the main artifact for examination in the following narratives. This task appears in various forms, either as an assignment sheet for students to apply, a style guide for instructional developers to use, or as user documentation (articles and videos).

In addition, a third and final reason for using the composing task as the focus of these narratives is found in the suggest practices of Nash and Spigelman. Nash's Ten Tentative Guidelines for Writing SPNs (p. 56-70) and Spigelman's guidelines toward teaching personal academic argument also reinforce the notion that a narrative should be guided by a specific purpose. Use of the frame experiment and resulting composing tasks helps narrow and focus these excerpts down to a portion of experience to explore in-depth. If I did not focus on specific aspects of the experience, it would be too difficult to collate any reasonable reflection that results a final discussion of my multimodal composing experience.

Pulling Back the Curtain

The work it has been to trace all of this background information into a cohesive form is reminiscent of the path I have taken as a scholar and instructor to reach this point. Finding stasis within the role of practitioner through acting as an instructor, scholar, and researcher is not an easy task. The narrative pieces that make up this study are all focused on my time and experiences that developed while working at Oklahoma State University (OSU). During that time I worked as a teaching assistant for and assistant director of the composition program. At the same time, I was also enrolled in my own classes and learning about my own role as a junior scholar. This journey of learning to balance practice and theory helped me carve out my own research interests, which mainly focused on the classroom and ways to practically apply the theories learned in my coursework. My immersion in these roles has led me to be a practitioner of specific theories and branches within the field of composition/rhetoric and professional writing. My experiences had a significant impact on my intellectual and professional growth. One of my greatest challenges was to learn to draw all of these roles into a manageable identity both personally and professionally. Part of this synthesis occurred when I began to understand that while each role is related to the other, each makes a different demand and requires different strategies to achieve the goal of competent practice.

Thus it became my goal to produce knowledge out of my own experience in such a way that I (and possibly others) can learn from it and apply these lessons in other situations. Along the path toward this goal I realized that there were risks to be taken and consequences of these risks to be dealt with. However, part of the journey was to decide which risks were productive and which were not. With that in mind, I take a risk and intentionally pull back the curtain at this

moment and make the following acknowledgement. The project that follows this introduction

will break with the scholarly form in the following ways:

1) The format of this entire text is intentionally multimodal. I do not feel comfortable

arguing about the importance and relevance of multimodal composing in a strictly

alphabetic environment. The importance of including my own thoughts on assignment

sheets and the inclusion of other types of media that are needed to explain the

complexities of my instructional experiences requires this specific deviation.

2) Media is incorporated throughout the text that follows. When present, I acknowledge

that how you as the reader choose to consume it will influence its importance. As a

composer, I keep this in mind and do my best to address the information in a way that

balances between letting readers make meaning on their own and still meeting the

constraints of a traditional dissertation, i.e. to make clear the meaning behind my text.

3) There is a metanarrative blog present throughout these chapters in addition to the text

of the chapter itself. These are presented at specific intervals throughout the document

and explore a different aspect of composing a multimodal dissertation and why that

decision was so important for me.

My request to you as an author (student and multimodal composer) is that you look upon this

techo-pedagogical study as a collection of items that describe how I learned to compose, teach

about, and assess multimodal objects.

The Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives hosted by The Ohio State University defines a

literacy narrative as "simply a collection of items that describe how you learned to read, write,

and compose" ("What is," n.d.). This definition opens up the idea that narrative need not only be

word-based but can go beyond print-based assumptions about what counts as a story. As

Chandler and Scenters-Zapico assert, "Such a definition is necessary to encompass storytelling associated with wordless, visual/aural representations associated with new media, and it positions an emerging generation of literacy narrative researchers to articulate new definitions, new research practices, and new theories" (2012, p. 3). This is my collection and I share it with you in the hope that the lessons I have learned along my own scholarly, academic, instructional, and professional journey can be of use to you.

Organization

The following organization is used in subsequent chapters:

The next portion of **Chapter 1** explicates the historical and theoretical overview of the multimodal composition pedagogy and practice that acts as the foundation for this current project. **Chapter 2** examines two assignments used in a first year composition course as a way to incorporate multimodal composing into the classroom. The first is a rhetorical analysis of a music video and the second is an evaluative web text. **Chapter 3** describes a public service announcement assignment sequence, which culminates in a web portfolio, used in a Technical Writing course. **Chapter 4** surveys the impact of visual rhetorical principles on firefighter instructional PowerPoint® presentations. **Chapter 5** concludes with a discussion of the broad themes found in the experiences of designing and executing these composing situations and how these lessons can be applied in further instructional practice.

User Guide

Because this dissertation breaks with traditional textual forms the following User Guide has been provided to aid readers in their reading experience.

Technology Requirements

The use of multimodal objects throughout the project requires that users have a PDF reader installed. Users that do not have this capability can download a free copy of Adobe Reader using a device that is web enabled at this web address: http://get.adobe.com/reader/.

Interactive Objects

There are two types of media used in this project that require user interaction for the message to be conveyed. These are the videos and interactive flash objects noted in the Interactive Object table of contents above. In the text, these objects are set apart from the alphabetic text by a box as shown below. In order to interact with a flash object, users should scroll over the image on the left (see Figure I for an example). A note "Click to Activate" will appear in the top left of the box, this indicates the object is active and will function correctly. Users should click the play button (the triangle button) in the lower left corner of the object. Once active, users should use the mouse to scroll over the hot spots identified by the blue circles in the image. Selecting these will create the action associated with the cognitive information the object is based on. Some of the objects require users to scroll over all of the hot spots; others will proceed through
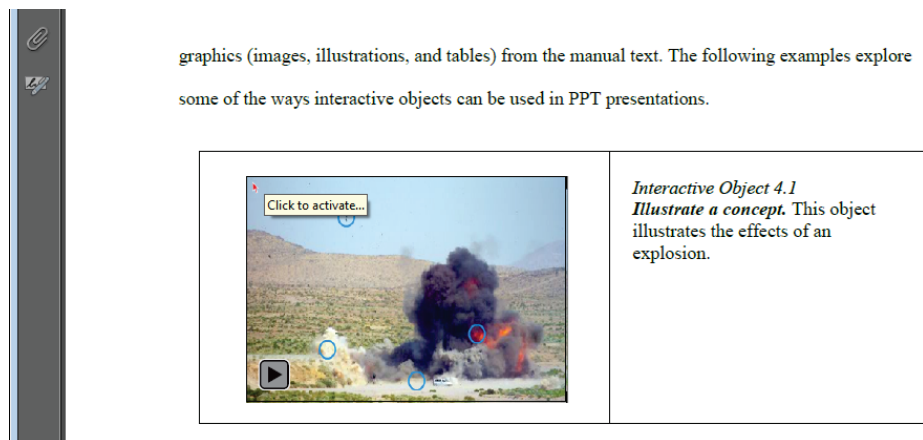
Figure I Interactive object example

the actions once activated. One incorporates a combination of interaction and self-paced interaction.

In order to play the video, users should scroll over the image on the left. A note "Click to Activate" will appear in the top left of the box, this indicates the video is active and will function correctly. Users should click the play button (the triangle button) in the lower left corner of the video. Both the speakers on your computer and the sound within the video need to be enabled for the video sound function correctly. Sound within the video can be adjusted by using the speaker button in the bottom right hand side of the image. There is also a descriptive transcript of each video provided in Appendix F. Transcript conventions for these are listed on the table of contents with this section of the document.

Video 1.1
O'Conner sings *WAR* on Saturday Night Live. As she sings and uses the image of the Pope, her performance operates simultaneously on iconic, indexical, and symbolic levels. The image operates iconically to show the Pope, the head of the Catholic church. O'Conner ripping the image is an indexical referent to the accusations of child molestation occurring at the time of her performance. Symbolically her ripping the image and statement to "Fight the real enemy" work to show her views on the situation facing those concerned about this issue.

For this theoretical structure historical narratives typically turn to the work of Roland Barthes or Louis Althusser (Laughey, 2007; Lester, 2000; Helmers and Hill, 2004; Moriarty,

Figure II Video example

Navigation

Navigating an interactive PDF document allows users several options for reading. While part of the process of making meaning in a multimodal text is allowing readers to select the best method of reading, there are two methods I would like to point out to help readers make those choices.

The first is that there are several hyperlinks inserted throughout the document. These are indicated visually by blue, underlined text like this: See Table of Contents here. Once readers use these links, returning to the exact spot in the document linked from can be difficult. This draws attention to the second aspect of navigation that using an interactive PDF can offer, page thumbnails. This feature can be enabled in the upper left hand corner of the Adobe PDF reader by selecting the icon that represents two pages on top of one another. Once enabled, a thumbnail view will appear in the left hand column of the reader (see Figure III for an example of the before and after appearance of the PDF). After navigating to another section of the PDF with the hyperlink, users can navigate back to the same spot in the document either by using the thumbnails to guide them visually or by using the page number. (Using the page number requires noting it in the box on the left of the tool bar before navigating away. Use the number in the menu box, not the number on the page.)

Figure III Thumbnail Before and After example

Historical and Theoretical Development

The vast nature of the field of digital humanities, digital rhetoric, or multimodal composing (all

of which can refer to similar scholarship and practice) requires a different approach to tracing

historical and theoretical background because of the sheer volume of information that this field

encompasses when taken in the broadest sense of the word visual. The multiplicity of fields that

studies of visuals draw on can make it any attempt to summarize it an intimidating one. Scholars

from Media theory, Media production, Media Studies, Visual Communication,

Composition/Rhetoric, and Technical Writing all work to synthesize a historical narrative that

situates their particular field in relationship with visuals (Hocks, 2003; Markel, 1998; Laughey,

2007; Baehr, 2010; Savage and Vogel, 2009; Olson, Finnegan, and Hope, 2008; K. Williams,

2003). As the term *visuals* holds distinct and unique meanings in each of these fields, I pause the

historical retrospective at this point to mention here the term is used in the broadest sense and

specifically refers to images created through various media. Each narrative of these writers

examines the relationship between their field and the concept of visual. Every one begins at

different points and picks up threads of scholarship and intellectual discussion that trace the

unique concerns of each field. A review of each individual field's perspective on the journey to

include visuals as a part of critical scholarship would be an interesting pursuit; however that is

not the purpose of this project. Instead, I will use an approach that is sometimes referred to as the

rhizomatic approach to explore the historical and theoretical influences for this project.

The precedent for this draws on the work of Moriarty and Barbatsis (2005). In their

introduction to an overview of the field of media studies, these scholars analyze the difficulty of

tracing a single connection (or arboreal root system) in the field of visual communication, as is

more traditionally done in scholarly fields. The authors note that "in visual communication there is no unifying theory, nor should there be, because the area represents the intersection of thought from so many diverse traditions" (p. xiii). Instead the metaphor of a rhizome is explored as appropriate because nodes in this type of system can be connected to a main stalk or may be separated to create new plants. Moriarty and Barbatsis note that rather than tracing a single linear, hierarchical root system that leads to multimodal composing, researchers may instead work to present major threads (or nodes) that each of these historical/theoretical accounts has in common. Therefore that is the approach taken in the following overview. The nodes explored here include the rise of modernity, the impact of semiotics and en/decoding, the use of rhetorical practices, and the impact of technological advances in the process of bringing visuals into critical engagement in academic scholarship.

Node 1: The Rise of Modernity

While several authors reach all the way back to cave paintings and Greek theatrical performances to begin their historical investigations (Savage and Vogel, 2009; George, 2002) more authors instead begin accounts tracing the field of visual rhetoric with the rise of modernity (K. Williams, 2003; Laughey, 2007; Olson, Finnegan, and Hope, 2008). Laughey (2007) in particular focuses specifically on defining the distinctions between pre-modern and modern societies. He writes "The term *modernity* is generally understood to refer to the social, economic, political and technological developments that have characterized the transition from traditional (pre-modern) to advanced (modern) civilizations" (p. 30). Table 1.1 contrasts the features of modern with pre-modern societies. This distinction is crucial to understand because the entry point into the field of visual rhetoric (to be defined in detail later) for this author was through the use of new media in the classroom. Without the technological advances offered by modern

society, I imagine my research interests might be located elsewhere. During explications of modernity and its impact on each field's historical interaction with the visual, three key concepts and scholars are mentioned over and over.

Table 1.1

Features of modern and pre-modern societies[2]

Modernity (modern societies)	Pre-modernity (traditional societies)
Capitalism/Markets	Subsistence
Industrial	Agricultural
Urban	Rural
Bureaucracy	Aristocracy
Science	Religion/Superstition
Rational	Emotional
Rule of Law	Barbarism (lawlessness)
Culture	Nature
Literacy	Oral Society
Individualistic	Communal/Tribal

The first key move that modernity contributes to the development of including visuals in academic scholarship was the critique leveled at media technologies by Innes (1951). Innes uses the notion that every medium of communication (i.e. media defined as parchment, clay, stone, paper, etc.) contains bias and that through this bias; technologies can determine new ways of living. Closely related to the views of this first medium scholar (a scholar focused on media instead of or in addition to message), are the views of the oft cited (and criticized) McLuhan. McLuhan's medium theory operates on the belief that "societies have been shaped more by the nature of media than by the content communicated through the media" (McLuhan & Fiore, 1967, p. 8). His concept was later referred to as mass media theory. From this beginning point McLuhan operates from the view that media are either *hot* (requiring low levels of participation)

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[2] Laughey, 2007, p. 30

or *cold* (requiring more work to understand). Table 1.2 gives examples of both types of media as

defined by McLuhan.

Table 1.2

Hot versus Cold Media[3]

HOT media	versus	COLD media
Photograph		Cartoon
Film		Television
Radio		Telephone
Tabloid newspaper		Broadsheet newspaper
Lecture		Seminar/Tutorial class

In McLuhan's framework, hot media provide all the information needed for a reader to

understand it, while cold media lack key concepts and therefore readers must work to provide it

in order to facilitate understanding. More recent work by Ulmer expands these notions of hot and

cold into a new concept, that of electracy. He asserts that "electracy is not against literacy but it

is the means to assist our society in adding a new dimension to our language capabilities" (Rice,

2007, p. xi). Extending Ulmer's concept is the work of Rice (2007) which can be seen as both a

play on McLuhan's original divisions of hot and cold media and as a break from it entirely. Rice

states that "the cool writer understands how media shapes her view of the world and her ability

to communicate within that world" (p. 155). Without McLuhan's initial theory the basis of the

interactive nature of media and multimodal production may not have been articulated in such a

way and the historical impact of this concept could have been very different.

The second key move in this time period was another critique of the negative impact that

writing for *the masses* had on knowledge creation. Several theorists worked to explore how mass

production and mass consumption created what they viewed as cultural problems that needed to

be worked against. One such scholar (and McLuhan's contemporary) was Berger. Drawing on

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[3] Laughey, 2007, p. 34

earlier theories of Benjamin[4], Berger (1971) interrogates the shift from *spectator-owner* to

spectator-buyer that advertising images create using methods of reproduction. He asserts that

"Oil painting did to appearances what capital did to social relations. It reduced everything to the

equality of objects. Everything became exchangeable because everything became a commodity.

All reality was mechanically measured by its materiality" (p. 87). His claim that mass

reproduction works to denigrate the value of art was reinforced by Leavis and Leavis, a scholarly

couple concerned with the "*leveling down* – or what is known these days as the *dumbing down* –

of popular culture via mass media" (Laughey, 2007, p. 42). Other mass media scholars, Lynd and

Lynd (1929) claimed that mass media consumption causes passivity and disconnection with their

study of *Middletown* (Muncie, Indiana). The Lynd's compared the lives of citizens in

Middletown in 1890 (when media exposure was limited) to the citizens' lives 35 years later

(when the impact of media was growing). They found that leisure pursuits in the 1920s were

more passive and less creative; causing a shift from public to semi-public or private activities.

The Lynd's did explore some of the positives of technology's influence on Middletown, but

overall their study reinforced the view that technology was a force that worked to shape (and at

times standardize) people's lives.

It is on this notion that the third key move of this time builds; that is the concept of

technological determinism. McLuhan's theory gives voice to this idea first, however it is R.

Williams who is known as one of the most ardent critics of the theory. McLuhan posits that the

introduction of a new medium will shape how people live their lives. In contrast, Williams

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[4] Benjamin, W. (1973) The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction, in *Illuminations*. London: Fontana Press: 211-44. Benjamin conducts an "exploration of the revolutionary qualities of media technologies, especially photography and film…due to reproducibility" (Laughey, 2007, p. 38).

(2003[5]) examines the various ways that technology is predicted (often for another purpose altogether) before it is discovered. His text uses the example of how railways and telegraph systems were connected to meet a commercial communication need. From there the explosion of telephonic devices has grown exponentially. I wonder what the first telegraph operators would think of the *smart phone* and all of this device's capabilities. Laughey asserts that "Rather than focus on the causes of technologies – as does McLuhan – Williams addresses what causes them" (2007, p. 47). What Williams gains by this focus is the ability to regain agency in the relationships between humanity and technology. Agency is another term fraught with multiple associations; but here it means the ability of humans to make choices, rather than to be seen as passive automatons simply accepting the dictates of technology. Asserting that humanity has a role to play in technological interaction also informs the next thread in the historical narratives examined here.

Node 2: The Impact of Semiotics and En/Decoding

The role of active participation is not unique to medium theory and its focus on the concerns that mass production and determinism may play in the creation of culture. No historical summary of the study of visuals would be complete without an understanding of the contributions that the field of semiotics (known as semiology in British scholarship) has made to the disciplines that make up this area of practice. The theory of semiotics and its intricacies are widely analyzed and discussed by both linguistic and visual scholars, however as this project has limited space to examine a variety of threads. I will not be addressing every aspect of the theory. I will instead focus on the aspects that impact the development of various interests in visual studies.

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[5] Originally published in 1974.

In very basic terms, semiotics conceptualizes language as a system that structures parts into units of meaning (Laughey, 2007). Two theorists are credited with the modern development of this system[6] which allows much of the

Signifier (word/image, sound, gesture): "Tree" (as written, spoken, or depicted)

Sign (a representation that stands in place of)

Signified (concept/content): "Arbor" (or the idea of "treeness")
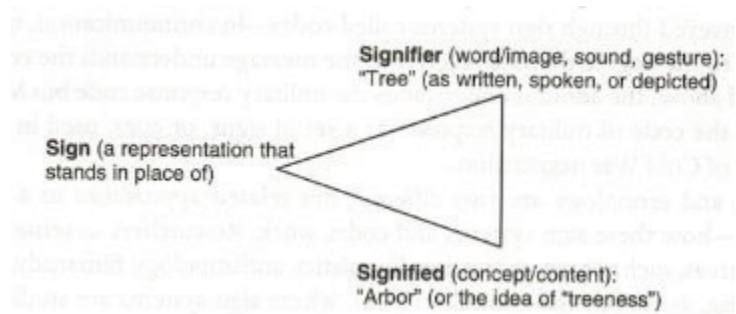
Figure 1.1 Saussure's sign relationships

work in critical examination of visuals to occur. The first is de Saussure (1966) who postulates that a *sign* is anything that stands for anything else. The relationship in Saussure's model is created between a sound or image – called the *signifier* – and the concept or content for which it stands – called the *signified* (see Figure 1.1[7]). While initially Saussure's work gave equal weight to both visual and verbal communication, later theories narrowed his focus to language as the preferred model for sign systems (Moriarty, 2005). Because this historical overview is interested in how semiotics intersects with visual theories, Pierce must also be included in this brief discussion. Pierce (1931, II), like his contemporary Saussure, theorized the representation of knowledge in a three part system based on signs. However, in Pierce's theory, the terminology used allows the construction of visual, as well as verbal, knowledge. Pierce uses the relationship between a *sign* (sound or image) which represents an *Object* (concept or content it stands for) as mediated by the *interpretant* (idea evoked in a person's mind by the sign) (see Figure 1.2[8]). This allowance for

Sign (the signifier)

Interpretant (mental idea)

Object (the signified)
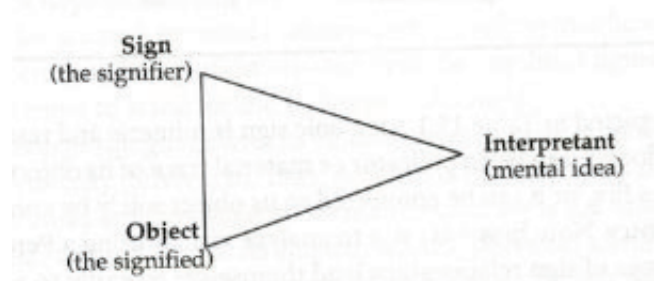
Figure 1.2 Peirce's sign model

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[6] P. Lester (2000) notes that this is actually an ancient concept rooted in the work of Augustine. Even the term semiotics comes from the Greek work *semeion* (meaning sign).
[7] Smith, Moriarty, Barbatsis, Kenney, 2005, p. 228
[8] Smith, Moriarty, Barbatsis, Kenney, 2005, p. 229

personal interaction with the sign before the Object is attached to meaning is a significant

contribution toward disciplines that focus on how images can create meaning, knowledge,

communication, and even at times arguments.

A further contribution of Pierce in this area that is a key to understanding visual studies is

the three categories of signs that can exist in communication systems. These are iconic,

indexical, and symbolic (Lester, 2000; Helmers and Hill, 2004) and all three operate not as a

hierarchy, but "each term describes ways that different types of images may be understood"

(Helmers and Hill, 2004, p. 15). It is also important to note that signs can operate on all three

levels simultaneously. In Video 1.1 all three levels of signification are represented by Sinead

O'Conner's actions[9]. (See Video 1.1 and caption for further details.) Because signs can operate

on several levels other theorists turned to articulating just how meaning is made in the process of

production and reception.

Video 1.1
O'Conner sings *WAR* on Saturday Night Live. As she sings and uses the image of the Pope, her performance operates simultaneously on iconic, indexical, and symbolic levels.
The image operates iconically to show the Pope, the head of the Catholic church. O'Conner ripping the image is an indexical referent to the accusations of child molestation occurring at the time of her performance. Symbolically her ripping the image and statement to "Fight the real enemy" work to show her views on the situation facing those concerned about this issue.
TRANSCRIPT

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[9] Wilson, 1992

For this theoretical structure, historical narratives typically turn to the work of Barthes or Althusser (Laughey, 2007; Lester, 2000; Helmers and Hill, 2004; Moriarty, 2005). However, Hall (1996) critiques the theories of Barthes and Althusser as assuming that the encoded meaning of a text functions to reproduce the dominant concepts of the state.[10] He asks "how does one account for subversive ideas or for ideological struggle?" (p. 30) Therefore I will turn to Hall to investigate the broader implications of what he theorizes as the encoding/decoding model. In this framework language is encoded by producers and decoded by readers in one of three ways. The first method of decoding is the reader accepting the meaning given by producers (called the dominant code). The second is the reader accepting some of the dominant code, but rejecting other parts (called the negotiated code); and the third is the reader completely rejecting the dominant code (called the oppositional code) (see Figure 1.3[11]).

These types of decoding are especially effective in the study of visuals in a way that assuming one dominant way of receiving messages does not. As the next major thread in this retrospective illustrates, it is important to allow for readers (or an audience) that may not react in the specific way a producer of a text may imagine.
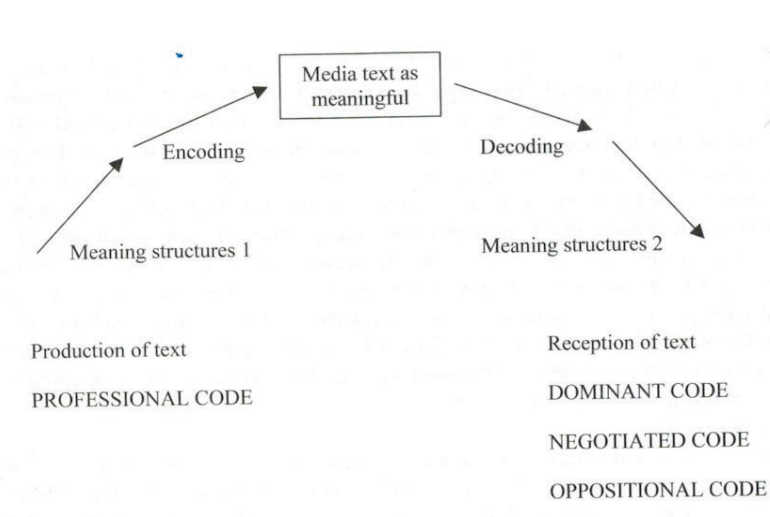
Figure 1.3 En/decoding model

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[10] Often studied under the term *ideology*; the complexities of this theoretical framework do not directly inform this project and will therefore not be completely explicated here.
[11] Laughey, 2007, p. 62

Node 3: The Use of Rhetorical Practices

The concern of understanding the audience (or user as is noted in Technical Writing theories) is not a new one to rhetorical practice. Well known Greek rhetorician Aristotle theorized that to be effective rhetoric must be considered public, contextual, and contingent (Kenney, 2004). In examining each of these tenants more clearly, historians of the visual field lay claim to a different aspect of what Aristotle meant and how that particular concept plays out in their own work and interests.

Aristotle's claim that effective rhetoric is public in the sense that it impacts an entire community is addressed in the ways that compositionists consider how digital writing (here used in the sense that word processing programs are a digital form, even when printed) creates a rhetorical situation that can make "explicit oral and visual rhetorical concerns that were buried in the last two centuries of print culture and conventions" (Lanham, 1993, 30). The situation that becomes explicit when examining digital writing is typically based on the rhetorical triangle taught to many first year composition students. The relationship between author, audience, and the influence of the appeals used to persuade or inform the audience of a particular message is one summary of this basic
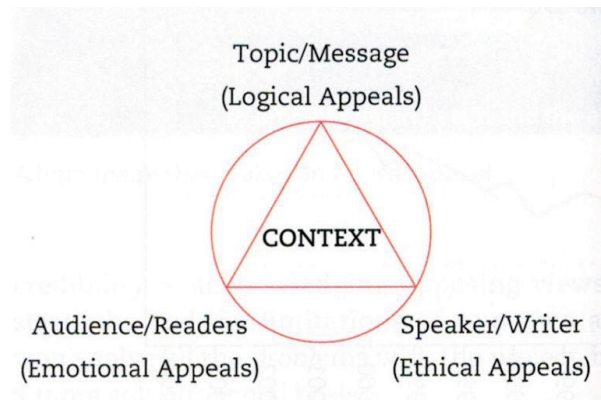
Figure 1.4 Rhetorical triangle

interaction. Figure 1.4[12] illustrates this relationship as commonly displayed in texts often used for first year composition students. The complexities of this relationship are explored in the work of a variety of scholars (Takayoshi, 1996; Amare and Manning, 2007; Porter, 2002; Hocks,

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[12] Lundsford, Ruszkiewicz, Walters, 2007, p. 42

2003; Blair, 2004; Foss, 2005; Kenney, 2004). The approach taken by this group of visual rhetoricians can be described as a discussion of persuasion. By exploring the ways that a visual image can employ appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) and other figurative devices (synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, etc.) advocates of the visual rhetorical approach consider how to make meaning. One advantage of this approach is the multiple options for defining *text*, by employing a rhetorical analysis approach users of this theory are open to the use of alphabetic, visual, and audio texts of all kinds and in all modes. Because this approach considers basically anything a text, the public nature of rhetoric is emphasized.

Effective rhetoric is also contextual according to Aristotle's definition. This focus on the fact that meaning is derived from particular experiences by particular speakers at a particular moment ties into the instructional practices of technical/professional writing instructors. Historical overviews in this field focus in on the ways that the relationships between verbal and visual components in a text work together to convey meaning. The contextual nature of how these components break down into two main threads common to most historical overviews. These are 1) the use of Gestalt theory to analyze visuals and 2) an emphasis on rhetorical aspects of design. Proponents of the Gestalt approach build on the theory that "perception is a result of a combination of sensations and not of individual sensual elements" (Lester, 2000, p. 43). This theory operates on four laws of grouping encompassing similarity, proximity, continuation, and common fate; and scholars use these guiding principles to examine ways to understand texts (Bernhardt, 1986), improve overall design (Moore and Fitz, 1993), and classify/evaluate visuals (Dragga, 1992; Kostlenick, 1989; Kostelnick, 1990). Historians in this field note that the work of Campbell (1995) was the "first to unify auditory, visual, and verbal symbol systems" (Markel, 1998). Closely related to the use of perception as one way to rhetorically analyze visuals is the

use of analyzing design principles both at specific textual and larger document levels. This work finds root in the scholarship of Porter and Sullivan, Tufte, and Mire as each researcher takes a different approach toward demonstrating "how rhetorical decisions impact the visual design of an online document or system" (Hocks, 2003, p. 210). By looking at design as an intentional rhetorically driven (and contextual) process, advocates of this approach investigate ways that composing can become a systematic project with purpose behind each choice. Toward this end Kostelnick (1994) asserts that "Visual cues transform the text rather than work in isolation" (p. 92). Kostelnick and others like him (Markel, 1998; Amare and Manning, 2007; Hart-Davidson and Krause, 2004; Porter, 2002; Hocks, 2003) note the importance of rhetoric in the process of design and composing in multimodal environments.

Aristotle's final criterion for effective rhetoric is that it must be contingent. While early definitions focus on the oral aspects of this theory, by examining the fact that the speakers could not know ahead of time what was most important or most necessary to say in order to persuade an audience, more modern scholarship complicates this aspect through examinations of how mass media **can** help give an idea of what is important to an audience ahead of time. Several media studies scholars contribute to the understanding that rhetoric is often culturally situated and that knowing what cultural influences an audience is operating from can help authors create stronger texts. The first theory is a broad concern rooted in the scholarship of Park (1922) and his work with the Chicago School in examining how media functions in the process of maintaining social and community values. Park's studies ranged from the relationship of media in immigrant populations to the influence of film on children. This was an important shift in the historical development of visuals because "Park and his colleagues in the Chicago School moved the study of the media away from the stimulus-response model to the exploration of the cultural context in

which individuals use and produce media messages" (K. Williams, 2003, p. 35). This shift was a key part of development toward the visual/rhetorical field that is the focus of my project. Without the understanding that media is a force that works to shape and change social/cultural influences there would be little need to advocate for competent practitioners who can analyze, understand, and create multimodal texts.

The second set of theorists that have played a key role in developing a need for competent practitioners of multimodal composing drawn on the material theory begun by Marx and Engels (1974). Engels published much of Marx's work posthumously, however the main tenants of Marxism (as Marx's theory is now known) influence the historical development of a need to not simply passively view media and the visuals presented by mass media.[13] Marx and Engels (1974) note that "The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production" (pp. 64-65). In other words, in this theory those who have access and the ability to create (in the case of my focus) the media that washes through society will be the ones who shape the dominant outlook of a society.

More recent media scholars still examine the way Marxism's theory of production operates in several different ways, one in particular directly influences this project and that is through concerns of access. Trimbur (2004) offers a perspective that examines writing as a "visible language produced and circulated in material forms" (p. 260). In his article, Trimbur asserts that in order to see the materiality of writing we need to see "writers not just as makers of meaning, but as makers of the means of producing meaning out of the available means of production" (p. 262). In other words, the role of a competent practitioner should not simply be accepted as making texts, but also should be examined to see how the **means** of production

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[13] The nuances and far-reaching impact of this theory can be felt in many fields of study; however, I will be focusing on how Marxism contrasts with Park's explorations of media maintaining social order.

influences the task as well. Access to these means (or lack of access) could control who makes the meaning and therefore what meaning is made and distributed. Ohmann (2008) adds to this line of thought that a new means of production (multimodal composing) will raise new questions of literacy and the subsequent concerns that surrounding understanding, participating in the development of, and the use of dominant forms of communication. While this can be viewed as an overwhelming task to ask instructors to adjust to, Ohmann offers this challenge instead of despair. "The age of computer technology will bring us some new tools and methods for teaching literacy. I hope we…will manage to shape that technology to democratic forms" (p. 262). It is with this hope and charge in mind that the need for competent multimodal composers in all types of classrooms is noted in this overview as one aspect drawing instructors to consider methods of incorporating media into classrooms in all disciplines.

The final theory from media studies that relates this part of my historical overview is rooted in the work of Keane (1991). In contrast to Marxism, Keane works to show the independent nature of media (in this case specifically news sources, also known as *the press*) in his articulation of *free press theory*. This theory operates on the foundational belief that every person has the right to decide for him or herself on all matters (no matter what the situation). Supporting this belief are the claims that free press is the only way to prevent misrule (Bentham, Mill cited in Keane, 1991) and truth can be discovered through unfettered public discussion (Mill cited in Keane, 1991). The concept of free press as originally defined directly influences the need for developing a rhetorical approach to viewing texts as historically and culturally situated objects. Without an understanding that each text (no matter what the mode) operates different depending on the situation it was written in and for, readers lose the ability to understand how texts can operate to shape reality (in the way Marx points out).

I want to by no means imply that these three fields only focus on these aspects of rhetoric, rather I use this approach as a way to help categorize the complex historical development of visual rhetoric and its influence in the composing processes used by myself and my students in the assignments examined in further detail in this project. As stated earlier, drawing a clean historical line through this field is a daunting task. I look to one further node of influence in its historical development before moving into deeper discussions of how these historical/theoretical influences were enacted in my own classroom practice.

Node 4: The Impact of Technological Advances

To state that technology has changed during the historical period leading up to my project would be a gross understatement. However, the point of this project is not to trace the changes in the hardware and software revolutions that have occurred from the inception of the personal computer to the present state of mobile technologies in the form of tablets, laptops, and smartphones (see Savage and Vogel, 2009 for this type of history). Instead the focus of this historical overview is to look at what changes occur in writing classrooms because of changes in technology at many levels. Specifically this section will focus on the impact of technology on linguistic use, rhetorical practice, and classroom pedagogy.

The first impact is on a linguistic level. Drawing on the vast vocabularies offered by the fields that have led to this project there are so many ways to describe multimodal composing. One such group revolves around descriptions of the modes of composing: hypermedia, hypertext, .html authoring, audio, and video. All of these terms focus on the method that a text will be delivered. Another group is focused on the idea of electronic writing. This one term can mean word processing, the use of images in conjunction with alphabetic text, or even the combination of alphabetic text with audio, video, or still images. This project however will use the more

recent turn in terminology, which is the use of the phrase multimodal composition. This term

encompasses composing in multiple modes either individually or simultaneously. In the broadest

sense multimodal encompasses alphabetic, audio, and visual content no matter what mode is

used to deliver it.

The next impact of technology is on a rhetorical level. Many scholars have explored what

rhetorical possibilities exist when composing multiomodally (Heba, 1997; Wysocki, 2001;

George, 2002; Amare and Manning, 2007; Hocks, 2003; Markel, 1998). The scholarly

discussions range from the impact of technology on the importance and use of visuals in

composing (Takayoshi, 1996; George, 2002) to the need for a new theoretical approach to

writing pedagogy (Hocks, 2003; Markel, 1998). This broad range of topics highlights why it is

such a daunting task to attempt to describe this field. Markel asserts that "the creation of this

rhetoric will remain a goal, and ever-receding horizon, rather than a circumspect project, for the

pace of the evolution of tools will probably outstrip our own efforts to chart the rhetorical

territory" (1998, p. 383). Porter (2002), Amare and Manning (2007), Hocks (2003), Takayoshi

(1996) and a bevy of other scholars work to articulate this complex rhetoric even as technology

continues to change.

Part of this rhetoric centers on how the "creation of electronic texts makes dramatically

visible the fluid and recursive nature of writing by dissolving distinct segments of writing

processes into one seamless flow of prose" (Takayoshi, 1996, p. 246). By examining the writing

process as a rhetorical practice, writing instructors gain the ability to articulate how composing

in a variety of modes changes (or does not change as some scholars contend) what composing

means. Another part of this rhetoric examines how changes in the writing process begin to

foreground the relationship between verbal and visual when the use of both becomes equally

important. George (2002) describes this as a "shift [of] attention, if only momentarily, from the product to the act of production" (p. 18). In this shift a variety of instructional activities are possible.

The last level of impact I will explore here is that of classroom practice. The various technological developments even in just the last five to eight years have brought about significant classroom changes (Selfe and Hawisher, 2004; Journet, Ball, and Trauman, 2012). Students now participate in classroom discussion boards, may create blogs to respond to classroom readings, and perhaps will use comment sections in online forums to both critique and create texts. In other classrooms instructors will use service learning approaches that incorporate the creation of multimodal texts (videos, interactive websites, and audio narratives) into larger works that argue to save local landmarks (DeLaGrange, 2011). In these composing situations students research, draft, and produce texts that fit the rhetorical situations presented to them by the overarching assignment set by instructors. These approaches to multimodal composing are only a few of the possibilities that writing instructors can draw on in an attempt to incorporate the use of technology into the classroom. These types of assignments simply scratch the surface of ways to answer Porter's (2002) call for a theoretical approach to writing. He asserts:

> We need a theory that isn't tied formalistically to genre considerations (whether the genre is email, hypertext, or the new media). We need a theory that focuses on writing as not simply the activity of an individual writing or the isolated writing classroom (where the field of computers and writing has been strong, but also limited), but that looks closely at the socialized writing dynamic and the conglomerate rhetorical dynamic of readers, writers, and users and their impact on society. (p. 388)

Scholarship on the best ways to incorporate multimodal composing practices into composition or technical writing classrooms abound in various forms. There are theoretical texts that examine how the composing (no longer simply *writing* as I mentioned earlier) process is changed by technology, there are pedagogical texts that give examples of assignments, and even texts that explore the dangers of using multimodal composing practices in writing classrooms. It is in this wilderness of texts that my project is situated. Steeping in the ideas and practices suggested by these scholars I began to consider how to best use media and multimodal composing in my own classrooms. In order to better understand my particular approach to the composition situations this project will explain in detail later, it is necessary to first narrow the scope of this field down further to the specific aspects that influenced my classroom practices. The next section will examine the three areas of theoretical approaches the closely informed my decisions in creating assignments and developing approaches to the work related composing situations I participated in as well.

Composition Pedagogy: Dichotomy, Process, and Practice

In addition to the historical, theoretical nodes that create the background for studying visuals and the creation of multimodal texts a similar exercise in examining the development of composition theory is also useful. For this project I focus on the three specific aspects of composition studies that influence attitudes and conceptions of what multimodal composing is and its place in the writing environment. To that end the following pages explore the nodes of the verbal/visual dichotomy, technology and process theory, and the role of practitioners in the composition process.

Node 1: Verbal/Visual Dichotomy

The first theoretical area that influenced my own pedagogical practice centers on the dichotomous relationship of the verbal and visual in composition theory and practices. Early authorial practices did not see such a distinct divide between verbal and visual as is a common practice in modern academic discourse. Aristotle advocated for the use of description in teaching, known as ecphrasis; and Quintilian posited that visualization is the key to the most powerful means of arousing emotion (Hobbs, 2004). Hobbs continues to trace the historical division of these modes of expression through Medieval and Renaissance times in several ways. He starts by examining the equality of images and words in emblem books, moves to examining Bacon's use of illustration and observation, and concludes with the Enlightenment focus on ocularism. Hobbs notes that societies to this point in his overview were what are now considered orally centered; this is in contrast to the print centered focus that later groups shifted to. In this print centered arena are scholars who see visual representation as holistic, capable of being seen instantaneously and verbal language as linear (p. 65). The final move in what may be seen as a struggle between visual and verbal for dominance in discourse is when Hobbs settles on the scientific revolution.

During this time written language became accepted as a representation of the world rather than a translation into a different system of signs as a way to interface with reality. This is a trend that has continued to modern scholarship according to several authors (Helmers and Hill, 2004; Williams, I 2001; Barnes, 2010; Stroup, 2000). Helmers and Hill (2004) assert that "images are treated with distrust; in Western culture, images have often been placed in a secondary and subordinate relationship to written and verbal texts and the potential dialogy between images and words has been especially neglected" (pp. 1-2). This distrust can be especially seen in First Year

Composition (FYC) practices that focus solely on the production of alphabetic essays as the best way to enter the realm of academic discourse. Debates about expressionism in composition classrooms in a way challenge the dominance of one type of writing as the best form of communication. The division created between verbal and visual communication begins to point out flaws in prominent use of prose in FYC classrooms, but still reifies the focus on alphabetic expression (with a few exceptions here and there).

Thus into a scholastic culture dominated by preference for written (alphabetic) texts as reliable and scientific modes of discourse come the concerns and interests of authors wanting to explore the ways that this privilege may be limiting composition classrooms (Olson, Finnegan, and Hope, 2008; Hart-Davidson and Krause, 2004; Stroup, 2000; Williams, 2001, I; Berger, 1971; Barnes, 2010). Authors who examine this aspect of communication theory tend to look at the issue from several angles. By exploring the main threads of conversation in this part of the multimodal composition field, one can gain a better understanding of why understanding the relationship between verbal and visual communication is so important to proponents.

The first aspect in this part of the field revolves around questions of restriction and dominance. Scholars in this area note the negative impact that a singular communicative focus can have. Kress (2000) asserts that "the single, exclusive and intensive focus on written language has dampened the full development of all kinds of human potentials" (p. 157). The restrictions Kress refers to encompass both analytical and cognitive skills that allowing a combination of verbal and visual authorship could bring about. These possible skills will be explored later in this section. Kress is not alone in his view; Williams (2001, I) also states that:

> If our classrooms focus on a single mode of representation—the verbal—then the concurrent implication is that only one voice deserves to be heard. In such a classroom,

students will not be able to recognize that verbal forms and visual forms—or better yet their combination—carry an equal degree of complexity, representative richness, and rhetorical power. (p. 21)

The concern is that students in an academic setting that excludes the visual from communication courses will be deficient in their ability to critically engage texts that combine both verbal and visual elements. In the same line of thought, Goggin (2004) states concern about splitting these two modes of expression by looking at how Burke's theory of terministic screens may be enacted in these two labels:

Burke teaches that terms are filtered through terministic screens that direct our attention to certain aspects and away from others. Bifurcation of word and image – of visual and verbal rhetoric – permits thinking about semiotic production, circulation and artifacts in particular ways but also threatens to render invisible a whole host of other kinds of rhetorical practices, objects and participants because they do not appear on the dichotomized radar screen. (p. 106)

Goggin's assertion is that the very labels *verbal* and *visual* impact the way that these two components of texts are viewed. This observation leads directly into the next area of focus for scholars investigating this aspect of multimodal composition.

The next area of focus is the rhetorical practices that have been created by the exclusion of visuals from composition classrooms. One observation in this area is that while composition courses allow students to explore disciplines outside of composing (i.e. race, class, gender, political, pop culture studies, etc.), common practices is that the final product in these courses is restricted to only producing alphabetic texts. Williams (2001, I) reflects that while all these disciplines "involve a complex interaction of symbol systems including printed words, images,

conversations, movies, television, magazines, and Web sites, …we cling to the idea of writing

about these representation systems in verbal text because that's what we do in composition" (pp.

23-24). What Williams calls into question is the idea that a text is only scholarly if it is expressed

in one (traditionally alphabetic) mode.

FYC courses tend to initially revolve around introducing students to the various ways

texts can create an argument. Critics of verbal exclusivity attempt to articulate the results of

students only being allowed to create texts that, while analyzing ideas from other modes of

communication, are only alphabetic in nature. For this group the question becomes what

instructional opportunities are lost in this situation. Fleckenstein (2007) continues this line of

questioning by noting that:

> Seeing requires interpretation; it requires creating relationships, for an image is composed
>
> of relationships…As such, no image is ever a mere unproblematic copy of some reality,
>
> never a reproduction mediated by an innocent eye. Second, no image, once created,
>
> remains static. An image is an event. (p. 16)

Instructors need to consider what aspects of critical consumption are lost by allowing students to

process the event an image creates for them, but not teaching how to decode that event. Williams

(2001, I) posits that:

> The verbal bias, then, is rhetorically perilous because it does not recognize the symbolic
>
> and expressive possibilities of visuals and this encourages students to value only verbal
>
> representations when their most effective rhetorical strategy might be to use a visual. (p.
>
> 27)

It may appear initially that this group of scholars is advocating a complete reversal of this

dichotomy. As Vitali (2007) contends "…to some people's minds, it's still difficult to accept a

relation of multiplicity without immediately turning it back into one of subordination and domination" (p. 236). However that is not the case for many scholars who advocate the inclusion of visuals in the composition classroom, which leads to the third focus of this overview.

Rather than advocate a replacement of the alphabetic with the visual, scholars in the field look at ways that a balance between the two aspects can be achieved. Stroup (2000) examines forms of composition that already achieve this balance, comics. He argues that this genre provides an example of balance because "in essence, rather than a page made monological by the dominance of either alphabetic or iconographic language, both verbal and visual elements are located within a dialogically animated field of contrasting (in this case, comically resonating) intentions" (p. 622). In other words, balance is created by giving equal weight to both verbal and visual in the final product. While this works in the genre of graphic novels and comics, critics contend that for academic discourse images cannot express a thesis or proposition in the same way a verbal text can (Foss, 2005). Advocates concede that in many cases this can be true. In fact Mitchell (2005) acknowledges that there are "fundamental differences between the verbal and visual arts" however he also asserts that "there are inescapable zones of transaction between them" (p. 55). It is these zones of transaction that multimodal composition scholars want to leverage in composition coursework.

To this group of instructors, theorists, and practitioners these zones are full of possibility and promise to bring to composition instruction skills and writing processes that can more fully leverage the use of technology to teach students how to exist in the multimodal world that surrounds them both personally and professionally. In this intersection further considerations about what multimodal composing is and how the practice can change classrooms must be examined before moving into further exploration of its impact on my own pedagogy. In

particular working to understand more specifically the impact that technology has had on process theory as it is enacted in the composition framework is valuable in better understanding the decisions I made when constructing my own multimodal assignments.

Node 2: Technology and Process Theory

One aspect of understanding how technology impacts composition process theory is to acknowledge that alphabetic electronic writing is **already** multimodal. Initially this claim may seem sensational and extremist. Goggin (2004) asserts that "in both a literal and figurative way, a rhetoric of written word is visual, distinguishable from other forms of symbolic representation by the sense of sight. In this sense, written verbal rhetoric is visual rhetoric" (p. 88). Mitchell (2005) describes the interplay between verbal and visual as well. He asserts that "there are deep and fundamental differences between the verbal and visual arts. But there are also inescapable zones of transaction between them" (p. 55). What he explores here is the *life* that an image is described to have when a connection is made by the viewer. In a similar fashion, writers (most frequently creative writers) will often describe a text as having a *life of its own* and going in a different direction than originally conceived. To extend this to the relationship between technology and process theory, both verbal and visual texts have meaning as they are created; and that meaning may be not what the author intended (as seen in Hall's work). This is also another extension of the relationship between sign and signified explored in semiotics.

What Mitchell, Goggin, and other scholars (Porter, 2002; Takayoshi, 1996; Williams, 2001, I) are working to point out in these types of statements is that word processing and other technologically based authoring programs are a form of modality separated from thought. In order to produce this very sentence you are reading here, various modes of communication have to be used. As Hall's model of encoding and decoding points out; the author encodes the

message in a medium (translating it first from conceptual thought to linear alphabetic expression) and then distributes it to the reader. The reader in turn has to be able to recognize the code of the message and choose whether to accept, believe, or resist the message. This line of reasoning pushes the concept of process theory beyond the typical understanding of what the process/product movement has traditionally evoked in composition studies. Rather than simply reflecting on how a writing process develops into a final product (Enos, 1996), contemplating how technology complicates the process of composing can reveal new information about the importance of including multimodal composing practices in the classroom.

Where early process theory scholarship has been criticized as missing the "connection to social context afforded by recognition of the dialectical relationship between thought and language" (Bizzell, 1997, p. 373), new scholarship surrounding the place of technology in making that process more apparent points toward the need to examine multimodal composing practices in a more deliberate fashion. The argument as to whether using technology removes the author and reader from the message even is an interesting one pursued by posthuman scholars such as Hayles (1999), Haraway (1991), and specifically in the case of composing, by Porter (2002). However, the complexity of this line of questioning is beyond the scope of this project. Instead of tracing the entire conversation I will focus on summarizing Porter's distinction between formalist and scenic/contextual theories of writing in order to better focus this section toward the concerns of my project.

Porter's distinction begins with defining writing in two categories. He writes that "from a formalist/textual perspective, writing refers to the words (the prose) in sentences and paragraphs" (p. 385). In contrast he defines scenic writing as:

Not only the words on the page, but it also concerns mechanisms for production (for example, the writing process, understood cognitively, socially, and technologically); mechanisms for distribution or delivery (for example, media); invention, exploration, research, methodology, and inquiry procedures; and questions of audience, persuasiveness, and impact. From the scenic/contextual perspective, writing technologies play a huge role—especially in terms of production (process) and distribution (delivery). (p. 386)

In this definition the role that technology plays in the **process** of composition is one of central importance. No longer is the final product the only artifact that can communicate to a reader. Instead, the way an author chooses to convey a message (the mode) becomes just as significant as the message that is being delivered. In this way writing in a technological world becomes multimodal and media of delivery begins to play a bigger part in the composing process.[14]

Lester (2000) posits this issue in terms of a reciprocal path that must be developed between the producer and receiver of a message. He contends that visual messages have "their own rules of syntax, [and] are being read, but this language means nothing to those who can read only words" (p. 353). It follows then that if an increasing number of messages are being composed in visual or blended visual/textual forms, then readers need to be able to understand these rules of syntax to understand them and make meaning from these multimodal messages. A number of scholars working in the field of multimodal composing (Foss, 2004; Takayoshi, 1996; Helmers and Hill, 2004; and George, 2002) emphasize the importance of not only understanding this key point but also changing classroom practices to reflect this shift in composing practice.

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[14] The impact of this concept will be more apparent in the subsequent chapters of this work as I choose deliberately choose to compose multimodally because I believe that is the best way to communicate my content.

This concept plays a very large role in the development of the instructional assignments examined in detail in later chapters.

Node 3: Roles of Practitioners

Another aspect of what rhetorically driven composing choices can influence is that of the various roles required to create these types of texts. In the broader field of Composition Studies, the practice of scaffolding from the analysis of separate parts to creating a final product is common. For example, the assignment sequence in OSU's first year composition program begins with practicing summary, shifts into rhetorical analysis, and ends with several short alphabetic essays that put into practice different writing tasks (centered on making a claim and then supporting it with evidence). In this traditional model, students inhabit two basic roles, those of reader and author. The reason for this progression is to allow students the opportunity to understand each piece of a composition, learn the intricacies of making choices as a reader, and ultimately putting that knowledge back together to make those choices as an author themselves.

The approach proposed by many proponents of multimodal composition is not so different. These two roles are still present in multimodal pedagogical approaches. Hocks (2003) asserts that "we must offer students experiences both in the analytic process of critique…and in the transformative process of design" (p. 644-645) in order to achieve balanced instructional situations. In this framework, offering students the opportunity to be both readers (receivers) and authors (producers) of multimodal compositions allows them the chance to work at understanding the syntax of visuals and the relationship between alphabetic and visual components in a final product. Williams (2001, I) argues that "confining composition to verbal text essentially ignores a multitude of literacies that daily confront us and the students in our classes" (p. 22). This line of reasoning had a large influence on both the instructional and

composing practices examined and used in my later chapters. The need to open compositional

spaces to more than just the concerns of alphabetic text (as was proposed historically by early

efforts of the of Conference on College Composition and Communication[15]) helps focus not on

replacing traditional essays and work products with media all the time. Instead this focus opens

the door toward author/producers being allowed to create using whatever mode is most

appropriate for the message being communicated.

In addition to the roles of author and reader, multimodal scholars posit a new role that

exists in media composing situations; this is the role of collaborator. Several scholars mention

how this role can be played out in various situations. Hocks (2003) mentions that "digital

rhetoric describes a system of ongoing dialogue and negotiations among writers, audiences, and

institutional contexts" (p. 632). In this case, the role of collaborator is not all that different than

that for a scholar who primarily composes in alphabetic modes. The difference is that

multimodal compositions have the potential for wider distribution. This possibility can require

the author to collaborate on a more on-going scale. For print publications there is a moment of

finality when ink is set to paper. However for some modes of publication, especially self-hosted

blogs, websites, or YouTube channels, there is never a *finished* moment for a text. It can be in a

constant state of flux, with comments allowing the author to refine a work continuously. In this

sense multimodal communication can be categorized as immediately ongoing due to the mode of

communication used for the content of a text. Rice (2007) notes that traditional, rhetorically

based topoi "situate writers and their ideas within a fixed place of discussion" in such a way that

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[15] See George and Trimbur (1999) for a historical overview of this development. The conclusion of the article highlights the "deeply-engrained logocentric allegiances to the verbal over the visual by holding the intellectual authority of written text over the presumably derivative and immature character of visual communication, thereby making the image subservient to the word" (p. 697). This supposed subservence is one of the aspects of composition studies that multimodal scholarship helped me explore and interrogate, both as an instructor and as a student/scholar in my own courses.

print upholds "fixed places of argumentation" (p. 33). In contrast, Rice offers an associative approach to this way of making meaning called *chora*.[16] Multimodal texts are more apparently ongoing by nature of the composing method (drawing on "pattern making, pattern recognition, and pattern generation"[17]) and the mode of communication. Because these texts can be located, appropriated and remixed, and then redistributed, the meaning of a piece is no longer situated solely in the fixed rhetorical triangle taught in so many first year composition classrooms. It is the ongoing nature that some forms of media allow that make the collaboration of a multimodal author different than that of an alphabetic one.

A second way in which the role of collaborator is enacted by multimodal authors has more to do with the complexity that digital projects can quickly grow to. Markel (1998) notes that publishing online often requires more skills than one person can possess. In this case, collaboration is critical to ensure that the final product communicates the message intended by the author and that any changes that occur during production reflect that accurately. Markel also acknowledges the role that remixing and appropriation play in creating texts. Because so many programs exist that allow authors to download, clip, and change existing texts this issue is one that can create unique compositional situations. On the one hand, remixing is much like the practice of quoting and citing in alphabetic compositions. On the other, the message of an image can change drastically if juxtaposed with other content in a way that the original author did not intend. Although this aspect of collaboration was present in the environments examined later in this work; the complexities of this are beyond the scope of this project and will not be explored

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[16] Rice traces this through Ulmer (1994) and Plato. Also influencing my understanding of the function of chora is the work of Kristeva (1984) and the way that a text is created through the tension between the symbolic and semiotic.

[17] (Ulmer, 1994, p. 36)

further. Instead later examinations will explore how the impact of collaboration can change the direction of a project.

Rhetorical Frames in Multimodal Composition

The final section of this overview of the theoretical and historical influences at play in this project focuses on the impact that the introduction of visual rhetoric has had on instructional environments. By examining initial objections and the responses by early scholars to these, a better picture is developed about how my own classroom is framed through the practice of rhetorical analysis as a mode of instruction. The nodes examined here focus on visual and verbal rhetoric in coexistence, the impact of visual rhetoric on pedagogy, and difficulties in practice encountered by other multimodal scholars.

Node 1: Visual and Verbal Rhetoric in Coexistence

The theoretical move to include visuals in the rhetorical practices common to writing classrooms met with resistance according to Foss (2005). She notes that these objections fell into four categories (pp. 141-151). The first objection was that rhetoricians are not trained to deal with images and non-discursive forms. The second focused on the fear that the field would abandon knowledge making about *real* rhetorical acts (see below for further examination of this objection). The third argument against this move cited that visual rhetoric broke too much with the theoretical core of the field. The fourth major reason focused on by naysayers was the point that imagery was considered a tainted rhetorical form in the early days of these arguments (Foss, 2005, p. 142). The body of scholarship that addresses each of these objections is plentiful and I will not attempt to include all of it here. However, my project deals specifically with the first two objections: rhetoricians lack the training to deal with images and that multimodal composition is not a *real* rhetorical act.

As an instructor, the lack of training does not appear to me a legitimate reason to not investigate the possibility of the use of visual rhetoric in an instructional environment. The work of Selfe (2007); Ball (2012); Journet, Ball, and Trauman (2012); DeLaGrange (2011); and Takayoshi (1996) all clearly illustrate that it is possible to teach the use of rhetoric in composition classrooms. Takayoshi's (1996) work investigates the way that technology works to foreground the rhetorical framework found in the writing process. She writes:

> With technologies such as word processing and page design software and laser printers, word publishing enters writing classrooms; thus, the relationship between content (words and their meanings) and form (the way those words are arranged on the page) becomes more foregrounded as an area of rhetorical in(ter)vention. (p. 246)

In this view, the technology of word processing allows the writer to consider more closely the relationships between what is being communicated and in what order that information is encountered.

This project will look at how Web 2.0 technologies deepen this theoretical view point by introducing web-based texts that are more reader directed (a text in which the author has minimal control over what order the text is viewed in). Journet, Ball, and Trauman (2012) work as editors of a digitally born text, *The New Work of Composing*, the various ways that multimodal composing is influenced by rhetoric. These are just a few examples of the many scholars who have been able to overcome the objection that rhetoricians are not trained in analysis of visuals.

The second main objection that this project works to counteract is that multimodal composing is not a *real* rhetorical act. Hart's (1976) argument was that "including non-social, mechanically mediated, and nonverbal phenomena in the rhetorical mix" (p. 71) would lead to confusion as to what parameters the field of rhetoric should be defined by. In addition Patton's

(1979) objections centered on the "centrality of language to rhetorical theory" (p. 143), in other words, rhetoric was best applied to language. In a time when textbooks assert that "everything is an argument" it is difficult to conceptualize an environment in which multimodal composition does not have a message to communicate.

One view opposes the inclusion of visuals as rhetorical and argumentative because pictures cannot point out the weaknesses of opposing arguments (as written and oral arguments can) (Kenney, 2004). However, the work of Lake and Pickering (1998) contends that arguments do refute on another through substitution and transformation. Drawing on the tenets of semiotics,

Figure 1.5a Uncle Sam Poster

Figure 1.5b Uncle Osama Poster

these authors show that replacing one image with a different one of opposite polarity can work to refute the original image's argument (substitution). For an example of this, look at these images of the Uncle Sam and Uncle Osama posters found in Figure 1.5a[18] and b[19]. In Figure 1.5a the argument of Uncle Sam is to inspire American's to enlist in the US Armed Forces and work to protect the government. In Figure 1.5b the opposing argument of the Uncle Osama image, published after the events of 9/11, is to work Al-Qaeda to destroy the US government. In order to create the message of these two posters, the author/creators have to understand the rhetorical situation of the intended reader. They also have to consider secondary and tertiary audiences that are present outside of the primary audience and understand how the different exigence of each

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[18] Humanistsofutah.org, 2002
[19] Jessica's Well, 2012

audience/viewer will change the way the message is communicated. Kress (2007) supports this view of multimodal design as well. He asserts that "design [of a multimodal text] brings together the interest/purpose of the designer with the awareness of the needs and requirements of audience; the environment the design is to be executed in" (p. 141-142). Again consider the message of the Uncle Sam/Uncle Osama images. These are read differently depending on where each is encountered and who is the reader decoding the message.

Node 2: Impact of Visual Rhetoric on Pedagogy

Taking the principles explored above as a representative sample of the various ways that multimodal compositions **can** be rhetorical, the narratives in the following chapters will show how my own instructional practice worked toward a changed pedagogy that does not simply stop with these early objections. Instead I wanted to work toward the call for a new instructional practice as posited by various theorists and researchers. One advocate for this change is Hocks (2003), he advocates that "As writing technologies change, they require changes in our understanding of writing and rhetoric and, ultimately, in our writing pedagogy" (p. 644). This project is motivated by investigating ways in which technology has influenced the way composing practices are enacted in classroom environments, for both academic and technical training settings.

All three of the narratives explored here intentionally incorporate the use of technology into the composing situations required by various classroom assignments. In addition to this call for a change in writing pedagogy, Porter (2002) also advocates that:

> We need a theory that focuses on writing as not simply the activity of an individual
> writing or the isolated writing classroom (where the field of computers and writing has
> been strong, but also limited), but that looks closely at the socialized writing dynamic and

the conglomerate rhetorical dynamic of readers, writers, and users and their impact on

society. (p. 388)

All three of the narratives examined in this project are focused on ways that author/creators can choose modes of communication that allow their message to reach beyond the classroom. In particular the narrative surrounding the Technical Writing course found in Chapter 3 focuses on how student work can be incorporated with other work already published on the World Wide Web.

Node 3: Difficulties in Practice

While scholars have been working in the field of incorporating multimodal composition into first year composition and technical writing classrooms for quite some time, there are still many aspects of putting this approach into practice that can be difficult. Amare and Manning (2007) note one such difficulty is that while students can recognize rhetorical devices in written texts:

They may struggle when identifying these in images and photographs or in recognizing how textual elements as visuals (e.g., white space, borders, shading, font style, size, and emphasis) contribute to the rhetorical function of these devices in the service of authorial intention and audience expectations. (p. 67)

As the following narratives explore, this is indeed an issue that can be found in multimodal composition pedagogical practice. Because this is one of the main difficulties for new practitioners in this area, I will work to explore ways that assignments and assessment can be structured to help students gain experience in this area without penalizing them for a lack of training.

The final major difficulty cited by early scholarship in multimodal rhetorical pursuits can be summarized by Markel (1998), who states:

A sophisticated rhetoric that effectively accommodates the use of digital media in

invention, arrangement, style, and delivery is probably some years off. Likely, the

creation of this rhetoric will remain a goal, an ever-receding horizon, rather than a

circumspect project, for the pace of the evolution of tools will probably outstrip our own

efforts to chart the rhetorical territory. (p. 383)

This goal is in fact a part of what motivated my own project. The following chapters explore how

pedagogical practices can be implemented in such a way that digital media is a part of these

rhetorical canons and how to put that practice into academic and training instructional

environments.

Composing a Multimodal Dissertation
Reflections on using multimodal composition for academic practice

~~Blog Entries as Metanarrative Reflection ~~

This and the following blog entries explore the relationship between the lessons I learned from each frame experiment and the process of collecting these objects into a multimodal document, this dissertation project. This series of entries is included as a metanarrative in which I am able to explore the larger lessons learned through composing my multimodal scholarly work that are not connected to the frame experiments discussed in each chapter.

As this project developed I collected, described, and reflected on the various multimodal composing situations that my academic and professional career required. During this process I began to realize that there were some concepts surrounding multimodal composition that were clarified even further through this reflective authoring and collecting of objects. Because these lessons occurred outside the individual frame experiments, I wanted to find a way to incorporate this aspect of my own scholarly academic writing into this project.

I began to consider ways to accomplish this that would work within the constraints of the dissertation and still allow the ability to discuss these more specific and personal applications. My previous work has brought me into contact with various theorists that have explored the issue of how to incorporate personal experience into a professional text. In particular I focused on Urion's (1995) exploration of how Kristeva accomplishes this in her own writing.

Urion outlines three methods used to incorporate what she calls "private text" into academic (or public) writing. The first is the creative use of typeface. The author can signify the difference between private and public texts by shifting from formal type (usually defined as Times New Roman, 12 point, double spaced in the academic world) to italics, bold, or some other more script looking typeface. This was not quite enough of a shift for what I needed to do with my metanarrative, so while I do incorporate aspects of using typeface creatively throughout this document, I still needed a different method to set these thoughts apart.

The second method Urion describes is to use long footnotes. In this case the footnotes operate not to "*fill in, as footnotes generally do, information about authoritative outside sources*" (p. 10), instead these describe information that may be viewed as tangential or irrelevant to some, but are important to the author. For a bit this seemed as if the method might work for my metanarrative. However, as I began to compose both the larger narrative pieces and consider how footnotes would work, I realized it is not appropriate for this project because my reflections are not directly related to the frame experiment itself. Instead I needed a method that could function to reflect on more global lessons brought out during the production of the dissertation.

The third method examined by Urion is to use graphic representation. In Urion and Kristeva's own work this took the form of dual structure (one column containing academic text and one column personal narrative) or physically inserting other text at the margins of the larger text (as is seen in the example above). It is this method I seek to emulate and extend with my blog entries.
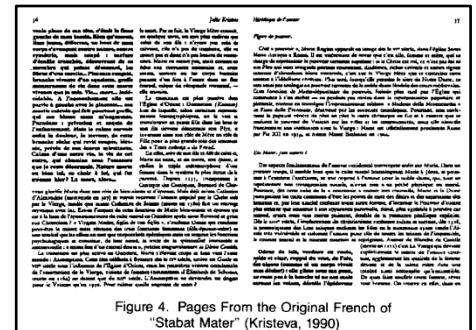
Figure 4. Pages From the Original French of "Stabat Mater" (Kristeva, 1990)

Because the structure of this dissertation is intentionally multimodal (in other words, not solely alphabetic) I consider the form of blog entries as a logical way to summarize how creating and authoring this document connects with the lessons learned from the frame experiments. Each blog entry follows the development of the larger narratives, but can also be read independently for a summary of specific phases of my reflective and composing process.

A blog archive with direct links is provided for readers who choose to read these entries independently of the larger text.

BLOG ARCHIVE

#1 – Metanarrative
#2 – Scholarly Anxiety
#3 – Message and Design
#4 – Collaboration
#5 – Future Practice

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS VERSUS PRODUCTION

The First Frame Experiment

So there I was, swimming in the ocean of scholarship on composition and rhetoric, casting about

for my own unique way of teaching this subject. At this point in my career, I had been an

instructor at several academic levels for just shy of ten years. My experience ranged from

teaching at K-12 primary/secondary private and public schools to teaching first year composition

and training adults in technical programs. One lesson I learned in all that time as an instructor is

that a classroom can provide an excellent opportunity to try out new theories and practices. At

times I still feel guilty for asking my students to do something their peers may not be asked to

do. However, what allowed me to reconcile this guilt and the desire to try new concepts is that

this is also what drives me to find the best way to show students what is expected by these new

theories and practices. Early in my career I just considered this one of the characteristics that

made me a good instructor. Later on I learned that this was the role of instructor/researcher that

Brandt, C. Selfe, Rose, and so many other scholars in the field of composition and rhetoric

inhabited before I did.

As I floated mentally in an ocean of possibility derived from academic conversations and

personal experiences, I remembered an assignment that I really enjoyed working with students

on while teaching 8th grade Language Arts at an urban middle school in Wichita, KS. The unit in

this instance was on teaching persuasive techniques, essentially rhetorical strategies. It was amazing to see the students light up when I told them they were going to make an advertisement for an original product of their choosing. They had to create the product and then create a video commercial to be played for their classmates. Students then got a budget of $20 to spend as votes for their favorite product. The product that got the most money/votes would be the winner. This attempt at using multimodal composing (though I did know the term at the time) helped me begin to shape the idea that media could be connected to student interest in the classroom.

Increasing student interest in the classroom was a main part of my instructional focus at this point in my career. My own interest in technology, coupled with discussions with students about how much changing technologies did (or did not) impact academic practices made me want to find some way to make a connection with my college student (mostly freshmen) streaming in from rural/semi-rural high schools. These students did not really want to be in my class, but as it was required they had to make it through somehow. The first idea that came to mind to address the goal of preparing students to be active participants in their own educational process was to have students perform a rhetorical analysis of a visually based text, in this case a music video. My reasoning for choosing this source was that this genre of multimodal text is so accessible for students. I like to think back to the early days when music videos were so new that there was basically only one source to find them: MTV. Now YouTube, internet streaming, and a variety of other sources make watching music videos (and even re-creating parodies of them) fairly common.

How did My First Foray Go?

The execution of my first attempt at using multimodal texts was interesting to me at the time. I felt like I was being daring and exploring new territory. As a PhD student and more experienced

teacher I felt like I had the knowledge to stray from the beaten path. I also knew the goals of the composition course well enough that I believed students would still get the knowledge they needed to be successful in other courses even if I taught them in a way that might be out of the ordinary.

Assignments and Classroom Structure

The basis of this narrative will be to examine the composing tasks developed by following the steps outline in the process of the frame experiment, I will examine each step as defined earlier and explore in this section how these were accomplished and/or received in the classroom. Step one is to analyze student progress in relation to course goals. Through classroom discussions and daily activities in my previous courses I noticed that students had a growing interest in technology. I intentionally asked these types of questions in my classes to see if this had any relationship to student engagement and interest in the course. As a result I wanted to investigate if there could be a change in the way students would engage in rhetorical analysis and explication of an argument (a basic course goal) if technology was involved. This became my positing of a possible change, as step two of the frame experiment requires. Because I was seeking to reach my students in a way that analyzing only alphabetic texts did not seem to do, I selected the strategy of having students analyze a visual text, a music video. This move at the time seemed ground breaking and very much out of what I perceived as the norm in this field. Later research would show that this type of assignment is actually pretty common, but I was just beginning. Having accomplished step three of the frame experiment, I turned my attention to the next step: devising a plan to reach this change.

As I considered the possible ways to incorporate multimodality into my classroom, at this point I was still focused on source texts. Therefore my plan centered on looking at a unique text

for analysis, not allowing students to create a multimodal text as later assignments would. I think I gravitated toward this type of assignment at this point because initially it seemed to satisfy my desire to have students produce alphabetic text (as required by my training) and to work with something visual (as I had selected for my possible change in the course because I believed it would increase student interest). The assignment had to fit into the larger pre-determined sequence for the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Composition program in which I was teaching. The assignment sheet that follows is what I used to structure this unit. I drew the basis of it from the shared teaching materials found on the OSU program's internal teaching website and modified that to suit my needs.

The core of this assignment is identical to that required by the OSU Composition program at the time. Students were to write an analysis of a text. Visual texts were an option noted by the common assignment sequence and other instructors commonly used advertisements, films, and even paintings as source texts for this assignment. I selected the music video because I felt it would give students more specific evidence to use during the actual project and also included the use of media. I wanted them to be able to pinpoint images, lyrics, and actions in the video for analysis.

Another unique aspect of this assignment was the way that I choose to breakdown each step in order to more explicitly focus on the process of performing an analysis, instead of just emphasizing the end result. This was an important aspect of this (and subsequent) assignments. I knew that I would be asking students to cope with changes on multiple levels. Not only were they transitioning from high school to college and the differences in instructional styles that are inherent in that change; but my class would also request that they encounter content in a different way (i.e. a music video rather than a print text). Using process theory to build in small

checkpoints along the way is one strategy I consistently use to help give students the chance to acclimate slowly, instead of just dumping them into a new situation and expecting success.

The last aspect of my strategy for this assignment was to be explicit in showing students the relationship between lyrics and images as the evidence to be used in their own analysis. Step two of the assignment specifically directs students to quote lyrics and reference image choices. This was an attempt to help students make the connection that these aspects of a music video could function in the same way that quotations and summary could in other alphabetic texts. This was also carried through in steps three and four of the assignment. The peer review document for this assignment requires reviewers to look for this support in an attempt to help students recognize the importance of using referent points in analysis.

Overall, my intention with the design of this assignment was to attempt to increase student interest and engagement by using a multimodal text for analysis instead of an alphabetic one. To that end I endeavored to use a process based approach in the assignment design to help mitigate potential difficulties students may have working with this type of text. In addition, I explicitly defined support for students by drawing the parallel between evidence from an alphabetic text (quotations and summary) and evidence from a music video (images and lyrics). The assignment that resulted from this purposeful design follows, it is annotated with brief thoughts on difficulties students had with the process and other information relevant to the frame experiment. These annotations will help the reader understand the resolution of this frame experiment as discussed more completely later in this chapter.

1113 Essay 2 – Single Text Analysis (15% or 150 points)

Purpose:

Students should write an analysis of a single text (print, visual, cultural). Students should write a thesis-driven analysis of one of the following rhetorical types: logical, cultural, visual or linguistic. The final draft should be 3-4 pages long.

Assignment:

You are to **examine** a music video of your choosing in great detail and depth. You will need to analyze the video's

> The connection between the textual analysis and analyzing a music video was seamless for me…but not for students.

argument and consider how and why the argument is made. **Do not** summarize the content of the text and do not respond to the text's argument. Your job is to **analyze** the rhetorical strategies of the text.

Step 1: Locate a music video with a rhetorical argument. Our text book claims that "everything is an argument" but not every text is as rich and full as the next. Therefore, you will upload the lyrics to your music video and a **FREE** way for the instructor to access the video (youtube, yahoo music, etc.) to the OCC **BEFORE** Mon. Sept 10, so I can approve the text. Once you have an okay, move on to step 2.

> An initial difficulty for students appeared to be conceptualizing a music video as a text that has some kind of intent or purpose behind it. Our classroom discussions during invention (i.e. students seeking out a video to analyze) centered on how to find this kind of text, one that was rich enough with meaning to complete the other parts of the assignment.
>
> This was part of the reason I required students to submit lyrics and a way for me to view the video. The other part was to prevent procrastination. We used the posted lyrics and videos as examples during in-class discussions on the relationship between claims and evidence, as well as between summary and analysis. I included this as often as possible to help students begin to look at their chosen videos as an artifact to be critically examined, not just passively absorbed.

Step 2: Examine the **author's purpose**. As with all texts we discuss in class, your job is to consider the author's purpose, make a claim (using evidence) about why he or she wrote the text, and who the text's intended audience might be. Look for an underlying thesis and for the use of evidence to support the argument. Think about what kinds
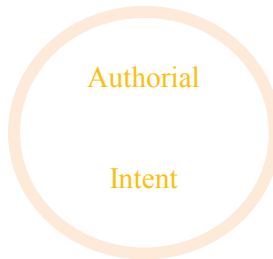
Lyrics & Images

of changes the author is hoping to create in the reader's mind or actions as you evaluate the author's purpose. What obstacles is the author up against? Does the author cope with all those obstacles successfully? What means of appeal (such as pathos, logos and ethos,

try to USE THESE TERMS) does the author employ? Make sure to quote lyrics and reference image choices that demonstrate the author's main ideas in order to judge their effectiveness, and integrate those ideas into your argument.

Also, consider **audience**. Closely examine the title, the lyrics, images, language and word choices that the author uses. What kind(s) of people do you think these would appeal to, and why? Are these people included in this target audience? How do their experiences suggest whether the author succeeded or not? Make sure to use quotes from the lyrics that shows us for who the author intends to write. *For more questions to help analyze visual arguments see Chp. 14 pgs 418-422.*

Authorial

Intent

It was at this point that students began to get anxious that they were not "getting the assignment" and that without some kind of guiding example they would fail as a result.

So, I wrote an example text and posted it to our online classroom forum. See Appendix A for this example. Using my example paper students worked through the peer review document in small groups to practice what would be expected of them when they looked at their classmate's papers. As noted in the grading rubric, their responses were part of the overall grade for this essay.

Step 3: Write a rough draft analysis of your text. (2-3 typed pages, completed and ready to be discussed.) Explain the author's rhetorical strategies. Explain how the author makes his or her argument. What kind of evidence does she provide to support her claim? Does this text speak to the intended audience? Why? Come to class prepared for peer review.

Step 4: Revise your essay into a final draft. (3-4 typed pages) Update your rough draft using the notes you've received from peer review. All parts of this assignment should be assembled in a folder. Remember, do NOT summarize the text assume we have seen the video. Simply analyze the rhetorical strategies used by the author. I will look for: a strong thesis, clear organization, smooth transitions, engaging and readable introduction and conclusion, and capable use of grammar, punctuation, usage, style, and tone.

Claims & Evidence

Page length: 3-4 pages

The final step in the assignment was for students to use the feedback of their peers to create a final draft.

Format: MLA. 12 pt. Double-spaced. Times New Roman (this font). 1-inch margins. Pages numbered, no title page—put name, instructor, class and date on first page at the top, flush left (double-spaced). A copy of the lyrics must accompany your final draft in order to be considered complete. All of your work should be included in a folder with your name.

Results and Reflection

Once the plan for a chosen strategy has been selected and executed, the next steps in the frame experiment are to assess the impact of the assignment and confirm or change the strategy. The following is my analysis of how the music video assignment worked toward increasing student interest in the classroom through the use of a multimodal source text. As I taught the writing assignment, I found that it focused on three main instructional concepts. These were the difference between summary and analysis, authorial intent and the rhetorical situation, and the relationship between claims and evidence. Each of these concepts helped to focus on the success (or lack of) of not only the assignment, but this episode in the overall narrative explored here.

Lyrics and images. The first aspect of this assignment focused on differentiating between summary and analysis – a typical skill for first year composition (FYC) classrooms. This emphasis was included in Step 2 of the assignment sheet. By asking students to quote specific lyrics and image choices, I was seeking to reinforce the classroom instruction that specific evidence is the key to strong analysis. Students used summary in their drafting process, but both the assignment sheet and peer review process required that specific evidence be cited to move beyond statements like: "The video was about love." When students wrote statements like this, their peers and I would ask, "How do you know that? What lyric or image makes you think that?" This skill was tied to the course expectations set out by the composition sequence required by the university. The difference between summary and analysis can be difficult for students to grasp and practice. By allowing early drafts to contain summary, students were allowed to begin from a task that most understood clearly and move to one that was more difficult for them.

Authorial intent. The next aspect of this assignment was to help students more fully understand the concept that a music video could be a text with rhetorical meaning. To help

develop this idea some classroom discussions centered on connections between poetry and lyrics. We also examined how the relationship of translating a song to a video sometimes created a conflict between what the student thought the song was about and what the video actually showed.

Some students chose videos that they had never seen before and were surprised by what the video producer used to translate between the audio of the song to the visual of the video. By discussing this aspect of expectation, some students began to see how their own rhetorical situation could influence interpretation of the video. They also dissected how the author's position had an impact on the song and ultimately the video.

Claims and Evidence. The last major aspect of this assignment was to teach students how to make a claim (often known as a thesis statement) and support it with specific evidence from their text. The goal fit very well with the emphasis on analysis for this assignment in the OSU Composition sequence. The advantage of the music video as the basis for evidence was that students learned how to pick out important lyrics and images. In a solely alphabetic text they had a difficult time formulating their own claim. Many early class discussions focused only on the topic sentences of paragraphs. Because students had been taught this as a strategy for finding important ideas, it was hard for them to move past it. By introducing a visually based text as the source for their own claim, it seemed that they were able to generate more original ideas about what they could write an analysis around.

Change or Confirmation?

While these instructional concepts were important areas to focus in on, there was very little to indicate if student interest was increased by using a multimodal text as the basis for this analysis. This created in me the feeling that my first attempt at incorporating multimodal composition in

the FYC classroom was both a success and a failure for me as an instructor. The success of the assignment was that some students did begin to view multimodal texts, in this case music videos, as texts rich with just as much ideology, personal preference, and structure as an alphabetic text. While not every student achieved this realization, the few who did mentioned this assignment as one of the most useful to them. Students reacted in a variety of ways to this type of assignment. However, the most frequent responses were to either not remark at all on the assignment or in a few instances to note how this project helped inform other work for the class. For example, several students indicated in end of the semester reflection journals that the assignment helped them understand how to locate evidence in written texts while doing research for later course papers. This was an unexpected positive result, but did not connect with the goal of this frame experiment, to increase interest in the writing process through the use of multimodal sources.

Looking back I realize I felt this assignment was a failure in that it was not structured to allow measurement student engagement. My goal with this first attempt at using media in the classroom was to engage students through the use of a multimodal source text. This first foray essentially left me with the feeling that I was still missing the mark. I began to seek out others who were theorizing and advocating composing practices that used multimodal source texts and discovered theories that moved beyond the textual boundaries traditionally set up in academic writing. Because I still did not have a clearly defined view of what multimodal production could be like, this frame experiment created in me the desire to continue seeking other instructional methods that would incorporate multimodal texts not only as a source for analysis, but allowed for students to have the chance to create these.

I began to explore the division between analysis and production among multimodal scholars and found several concepts that helped to shape my next frame experiment. Hocks

(2003) is among the authors that argue these two acts have a significant relationship with one another. He notes that students do need to learn the process of "how to critique the saturated visual and technological landscape that surrounds them as something structured and written in a set of deliberate rhetorical moves. They then need to enact those visual moves on their own" (p. 644). Wysocki also notes that writing for the Web would allow instructors to enlarge what is meant by the term composition (qtd in George, 2002, 27). Based on my sense of failure in the first attempt with multimodal composing, I realized that while I felt the music video assignment started me on the right track, I still was not satisfied with the fact that students did not get to produce anything aside from alphabetic text. It was after my research into what others were doing in the composition field with multimodality that I realized I really wanted to try something more interactive with my students, instead of just using multimodal sources. It was at this point in my academic and pedagogical journey that two of my colleagues approached me about incorporating interactive multimodal texts into their own classrooms. This collaboration offered me the chance to re-work the focus of my frame experiment and also develop knowledge in conjunction with other practitioners in the field. My colleagues were also graduate teaching assistants at OSU and followed the same assignment sequence I was using, so it was a natural step for all three of us to collaborate on a new assignment sequence.

Collaboration in Action

My colleagues were Phillip, who was teaching a linked course with the majority of his students being from the Engineering department, and Kim, who was teaching a course of nontraditionally admitted students (students who did not meet university acceptance guidelines but appealed through a university process and were conditionally admitted). Together we developed an approach to the course that led students through a sequence of assignments in which the class

created groups that became firms to consult on a specific project. For Phillip, students consulted on the best way to re-engineer a small town in Kansas that had been ravaged by a tornado and destroyed the community as it had existed before. Kim's students created advertising consulting firms that advised either Dove or Calvin Klein on ways to rebrand current advertising campaigns. Watching my colleagues pilot the assignment in the unique ways their classes required, I became intrigued by the texts their students produced. As they taught, we would have informal discussions regarding the progress of the assignment sequence and anything that happened we had not expected. In both cases, it was of note to all of us that students seemed to gravitate toward the same type of text. Most of the groups chose to use a website to communicate their information, even though the same amount of support was offered for the other multimodal composing options. We had no way to account for this, so it was just something we discussed as interesting. With permission from Phillip and Kim, the next time I taught a Composition I class I reused the documents we had created and tailored them to the specific needs of my own classroom.

I was drawn to use this assignment sequence for several reasons. The first is that I had just begun to awaken to the possibilities that digital texts could bring for students. Looking back now I see that my interest in teaching my students how to use the tools commonly called Web 2.0[20] directly correlated with my own use of these tools in my coursework. I had begun to experiment with making a web-text for my final project in another course and started to look at interactivity as a rhetorical decision, not just as the result of shiny web tools that students liked to work with.

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[20] "Web 2.0 refers to the next generation of Internet services such as blogs, wikis, social networking sites, and technologies currently under development that will change how individuals collaborate and interact online" (Doering, Beach, O'Brien, 2007, 41).

Again, I felt besieged by the choices that I could require students to work with in order to achieve what I saw as liberation of composition from a purely textual form. My own research and conversations around this time began to circle this question of "what is the future of writing going to be like?" Seeing no easy answer on the horizon, I wanted to try to allow students to explore that issue through authoring a webtext centered on a rhetorical issue; specifically how to modify advertisements to appeal to a wider audience.[21] Based on my research into what multimodal composing meant, I wanted to break away from only using text, but I still felt tied to the expectations of my field, my colleagues, and my supervising professors. Even if these expectations were not real, I had convinced myself they were and operated tied to a stake halfway between where I wanted to be and where I saw the use of Web 2.0 software and composing strategies leading me.

Spreading my Wings Again

Moving from my first attempt at using media in my classroom (analyzing a music video) to my second attempt (creating a webtext) there were several aspects that reflecting back, I see as critical differences. The first is that in the music video assignment I was a complete novice to the nuances between the use of multimodal texts as a source to analyze and multimodal composing as a way to produce a final text. I think for most instructors new to this field that is a common starting point. Bolstered with my new research and the desire of my colleagues to work cooperatively on a multimodal assignment, I felt confident enough to try to incorporate creation of media as a part of the assignment.

The second aspect that was different between the music video analysis and the webtext was the switch from the beginning level skill of analysis to the more advanced (in my mind)

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[21] Note the word text here still means alphabetic, I was still tied to the notion that writing has to be letters to create meaning.

aspect that creating a webtext argument required from students. I really think this distinction did not really become clear until I began reflecting on these assignments for the purpose of composing the document you are currently reading. My reflection for this project also draws me to consider what ways my instruction was still tied to what I have come to term the academic constraints on multimodal composing. I still see in many aspects of the assignment explored in this section, covert and overt attempts to fulfill the alphabetic demands of traditional page length requirements.

Assignments and Classroom Structure

As in my previous examination, the following section will be focused on the composing task set before students to allow the information to focus on how multimodal composing could possibly work in this situation. At the time I revisited the documents for creating a webtext (visual/textual) argument, I had several goals in mind for my students. The first goal directly tied to the results of my first frame experiment with the music video. This goal was that I wanted students to see that a using the combination of alphabetic text and visuals together could, in some cases, make a stronger argument than the use of alphabetic text alone. This desire was borne out of my own investigation into how design could be a rhetorical element and a critical aspect of composing a text.[22]

The other goals were borne out of other aspects of teaching this course that I had identified after previous classes. One of these was to show students that is was possible to challenge the accepted advertising norm that using sexual appeal is a good way to market a product. This goal was jointly developed out of the essays available in the Comp 1 assigned textbook and the direction my previous collaboration with Phillip and Kim had taken. One of the

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[22] Though I was not able to articulate it this clearly yet, that would come later!

course goals for Comp 1 was to introduce students to the concepts of rhetorical analysis. My colleagues and I wanted to design an assignment that made students aware of the rhetorical situation of the advertisements, but at the same time provided a rhetorical environment of their own that they had to act within.

A third goal became apparent through the overall design of the component parts of the assignment. This goal was to consider how the process based pedagogy I tried to employ with alphabetic texts would work in a webtext assignment. The documents students were required to complete as a part of creating an identity as an advertising executive helped achieve this goal. After exploring the specifics of the assignment below I will return to reflect on how these goals were met in the classroom.

The design of this assignment was similar to the music video analysis in that it followed the OSU composition assignment sequence and still maintained an alphabetic end result (see assignment for textbank requirements). However, other aspects of the assignment were very different. As the main change posited in this frame experiment was focused on creation of a visual and textual webtext, students were introduced to a variety of examples they would have the opportunity to create. In this assignment, students could work individually or collaboratively. Students also were allowed to select the mode of their final text (either: a poster/flyer/pamphlet series, a website/wiki, or a video). These aspects of the assignment were put into motion in my initial collaboration with Phillip and Kim. When I came back to the assignment to redesign it for my own class I kept the aspects that were useful to me, such as using readings from the course's required text and the option of a group.

One of the aspects that I changed in my revision was to more explicitly illustrate examples of each mode students could choose as a final text. To this end I spent more class time

than I usually would looking at and critiquing the three types of final text students could choose from. I did this in support of my overall frame experiment goal, to help students see that the combination of verbal and visual could make a strong (perhaps stronger) argument than alphabetic text alone.

The final aspect in the design of this assignment that was similar to the music video assignment is the use of process based pedagogy as a way to help students learn the composing process for multimodal texts. There were three nodes of assignments used in this process. The first was the two group meetings and supervisor consultation required by the assignment. These were established in an attempt to help students learn how to plan for a long term project and also receive feedback to incorporate into that project. Because the final text format would be different from what is usually expected of students I felt these were important to help them navigate through the process of producing a multimodal text. The next node was the individual work log and self-evaluation completed individually by students. These aspects of the assignment were included to attempt to help students reflect on how the overall process of creating a webtext differed from (or was similar to) other writing assignments that only required alphabetic text. The final node was the project evaluation and group member evaluation completed individually by students. These were included to help students focus on different aspects of the process theory. Instead of focusing on how they performed, they critically analyzed how well their final text met the ultimate goal of the group. This type of self-reflection was included to help encourage students to think about ways to improve awareness of composing techniques and long term planning. The following assignment sheet is the result of these design efforts. It has been annotated with other information relevant to the teaching narrative explored here.

Essay 4

Evaluative/Proposal

Simulation

You will work individually or in groups to create your own advertising consulting firm. Your firm will prepare a visual/textual report that addresses the marketing issues that **EITHER** Calvin Klein **OR** Dove has experienced. This report will be based on an evaluation of a current advertising campaign and include a proposal on how the companies can address the issues identified by your firm. You or your team will give a 5-7 minute formal presentation using the visual and textual elements developed. The report should be designed for the marketing departments to read, but also for them to distribute to other stakeholders as informational material. Your team is also required to schedule one consultation with your supervisor, if this consultation is not scheduled your final project cannot be accepted.

> The simulation aspect of this assignment intrigued me, but was brought by another colleague so I did not pay particular attention to its possible impact. While not a true simulation, my colleague called it that, so I will keep it here.

Writing

You or your team will create a visual/written text in which you relate a particular problem within the advertising campaign chosen. The problem must be one that is not solved or not sufficiently solved by practices currently in place, but which accomplishes the needs/goals of the company. Your firm should address your text to the broad group of CK or Dove stakeholders. Students may work individually or as a group to identify the nature of the problem itself including the many features discussed in previous essays and class discussions. The essay should show how these features are manifested in the particular situation in the advertising campaign chosen. The problem and its features should be discussed in relation to the complex set of goals and needs of the many stakeholders involved in the target company.

> We used pieces from the assigned textbook earlier in the course to identify rhetorical appeals. These previous discussions helped some students in identifying issues with the campaigns. One drawback was that students who did not read the articles previously were even more lost in the class discussions.

Individual firms must use 4 sources. Group source requirements will increase by 2 per group member. This text is meant as a persuasive document. Its goal is to convince the stakeholders and decision makers of CK or Dove of the need to solve this problem. Your firm should use elements of visual rhetoric to enhance your textual information. Some options for the visual portion include: website or wiki, video with informational handout (both must be present in this option), or pamphlet, flyer, poster combination (all three must be present in this option). Individual assignments must be 5 pages long. Group assignments will increase by 2 pages per group member.

GOALS

This assignment is rather complex and will require you to keep in mind many different goals. A few goals to keep in mind while completing this essay are:

1. **Persuade the simulated company of the need to act on the problem.**
2. **Connect the information found in your sources to the goals and plans published by your target company.**
3. **Select the appropriate medium for your visual component and use your visuals rhetorically to make your case.**

4. **If you are working in a group, make sure your group works effectively and efficiently and that your final product has a consistent message and style.**

This is intended to be a persuasive document and you should try to use what you learned about rhetoric during previous essays to create an effective case for action. Consider the needs, values and knowledge of your readers. Make something that will be effective for both the marketing department and for other company stakeholders.

Thesis
&
Visuals

1) **Persuade the simulated company of the need to act on the problem and propose one solution to that problem.**

Make sure your goal is clear. You are trying to present a problem and convince people that it needs to be solved and then outline one possible approach to solve the problem. Feel free to mention alternate methods or possible solutions if you wish. This can help to convince your audience that the problem is manageable.

2) **Connect the information found in your sources to the goals and plans published by your target company.**

Specifically, try to draw connections between your outside information and these essays discussed in class:

> "Social Lubricant"
> "Those Unnerving Ads Using 'Real' Women"
> "When Did Skivvies Get Rated NC-17"

I used classroom discussions as an opportunity to emphasize that each *firm* needed to work to develop their ethos as authoritative critics. We used the articles from the text to work toward that end. In this end this was actually one of the aspects of the assignment that frustrated students the most. The transition from using MLA and APA in an academic text to making that form work in a visual/textual form was a challenge.

Use these sources (with documentation) in your own writing by showing how the ideas you discuss meet the goals which these groups have set for the community.

3) **Select the appropriate medium for your visual component and use your visuals rhetorically to make your case**

Since it will require visual components as well, this essay is significantly different from the others we have written. There are three basic options for the assignment, a website or wiki, a video w/handout, or a poster, flyer, pamphlet combination. The three options are quite different and you should carefully consider the nature of your problem and the skills of your group members before settling on one option.

Rhetoric
&
Design

For all 3 options, you are required to use 5 pages (+ 2 per group member) of double spaced 12 point text. We will call this your "text bank". Your text bank does not include oversized headings, graphics, or visuals. However, it can include ALL the words included in your handouts, pamphlets, posters, any headings or menu options (re-sized to 12 pt font) and any dialogue or screen captions in your video. Although all the text in the text bank should add up to 5 pages in 12 point double spaced font, you should feel free to re-size and re-font it as necessary in your promotional documents. The text bank is more of a way for me to ensure everyone meets the same requirements for the essay.

In addition to the page length requirements there are unique visual requirements for each particular option.

Website/Wiki

For the website or wiki option, you will construct a hyperlinked webpage containing information about your problem. The site should contain at least 6 distinct pages including a home page. The site should also make effective use of graphics, visuals, backgrounds, and headings. Websites and wikis would be particularly good options for complex problems with many separate sub-issues.

An "A" level site would likely use at least 10 different visuals which are rhetorically effective, well arranged, and well connected to the textual material on that page. It would also have an effective organizational architecture and reader friendly layout.

Video

For the video option, you will film/edit/create a 5 minute persuasive video to be accompanied by an informational handout. The video should include sound, images, and words (this can be narration, interview, or captions). The words in the video and your handout will both be included in your textbank, so the handout may be fairly small if you have a long or detailed video. Videos are particularly good tools for persuasion since they can use sound, language, and images to persuade. However, they often struggle to convey complex or technical information. You should try to use the images and sound to make an emotional appeal while remaining professional and unbiased.

This was part of my initial effort to articulate how design was a related part of the text and not a separate after thought. When my colleagues and I brainstormed for the original assignment we had a long discussion about how much guidance to give students about specific for the end project. In the end, the compromise was to suggest possibilities for an "A-level" project. Even these were difficult to create as none of us were really sure what students would have the ability to compose.

An "A" video will show many different images all tied to the subject being discussed and will seek to both inform and persuade the audience. It should have an effective soundtrack and relevant dialogue. A good video will be much more than recording yourselves talking.

Poster, Flyer, Pamphlet

For the pamphlet and poster option you should prepare 3 separate documents: a one page flyer, a large professional style poster (not handmade, something you can send to an office to duplicate), a professional looking multi-page pamphlet which includes visuals and text. The pamphlet will contain most of your text so you can balance it how you want and include additional small documents inside if you like (bookmarks, calendars, info sheets, etc). Your words can be similar, but not exactly the same on the three documents and you can include the words on all three inside your text bank. However, you should find and use different visuals for all three documents. Pamphlets are good for drawing in large numbers of people without forcing unwanted information on them. Posters and flyers should intrigue or interest readers while the pamphlet can effectively distribute the details of the idea.

An "A" pamphlet/poster/flyer will consider the different roles of the three documents and produce them to meet those goals. It will make effective selection of the MOST important info to contain in each section and will chose visuals carefully to match the language content. Fonts, headings, etc will be sized and changed to be effective in the document. The pamphlet will be easily readable, well organized and visually appealing.

4) **If you are working in a group, make sure your group works effectively and efficiently and that your final product has a consistent message and style.**

Because you are working in a group, a large part of your grade will be based on the final version of your project. This score will be the same for all group members. However, your overall grade will also reflect your own individual contribution to the project. Additionally, you will receive points for your participation in group planning and group editing activities. You can look at the rubric for a full break down of points, but below is a description of the different activities and documents you will complete along with the final version of your project. If you work individually you will still complete ALL of these documents as well.

Process

Pedagogy
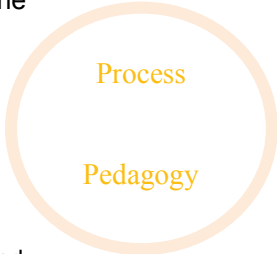
1. **Pre-planning Group Meeting**

Your group should meet early on to make decisions about the project. At this meeting you have a specific form to fill out which is posted on the course site called the "Planning Meeting Form". At the meeting you should select a genre for your project, clearly define your topics and goals, create a detailed schedule for your project, and evenly divide the project workload among your group members based on your own interests and strengths. I strongly recommend making an appointment at the OSU Writing Center to have a tutor guide you through the planning process.

2. **Group Editing Meeting**

Initially students objected STRONGLY to these meetings and documents, citing concerns about busy work. However, later in the composing process several groups discussed in class how these mini-steps in the process helped them realize how much work goes into the documents we read on a sometimes daily basis.

Later in the process your group should get together to compile and edit the final version of your project. At this meeting you should decide on the overall organization of your project, choose consistent fonts, headings, and format for your documents, settle on a level of tone or formality for your documents, make sure your terminology and facts are consistent throughout, and decide how and where to incorporate your visuals. The form for this meeting is also posted on D2L.

3. **Individual Work Log (and drafts)**

Each student should maintain their own Individual Work Log. This is a record of when you worked on the project, how long you worked, and what you accomplished during that time. Any time you work, open your log and make a note of the date, time, and what you got done. Be as detailed as possible and save any drafts as evidence.

4. **Post-Writing Self Evaluation**

At the completion of the project you will write a one page 3-4 paragraph evaluation of your own contribution and performance in the project. What did you help with? How did it turn out? Were you easy to work with? Difficult? Did you take the lead on this project or did you let someone else lead and simply play your role effectively?

5. **Post-Writing Project Evaluation**

Evaluate the final version of your project in one page (3-4 paragraphs). What were the goals your group was trying to accomplish? How did you go about it? Do you feel your project achieves those goals? What are the strengths of your project? Why did you pick the genre you did? How did your group go about creating that genre type? Did you use software or equipment? How did you incorporate your visuals with your text? Why did you pick the visuals you did?

6. Group Member Evaluation

Everyone will complete your own ANONYMOUS evaluation of the other members of a group. This gives you some recourse if some of the group members do not complete their share of the work or become difficult to work with. There will be a handout with several questions on a 1-6 scale that you should answer about each member of your group. This form will be posted on D2L.

7. Supervisor Consultation

Your group will schedule and attend a required consultation with your supervisor. Be prepared to show your firm's progress, discuss the overall goal of your firm's proposal, and outline the approach you will take to fix the problem you have identified.

I scheduled the required conference about mid-way through the composing process in an attempt to catch students who were not understanding (or working on) the final product. I was surprised by how many students actually had begun work on their chose visual/textual product when the group came in for the consultation.

Results and Reflection

My assessment of this frame experiment focuses on the three goals that I had in mind when beginning and how these developed in ways that I found to be very interesting. Looking at the ways these three concepts were executed in the frame experiment I can begin to shape a picture that would either confirm the strategy or require me to continue to change it to achieve my goals.

       Thesis and visuals. I tried to continually emphasize to students that their final visual/textual product had to have a central goal or focus that was communicated through both the text and images used in whatever form they chose to compose. One direct example of how I accomplished this was by creating opportunities in daily class time for students to discuss the various approaches that could be taken with the assignment. We looked at examples of all three forms that students could use and evaluated what the message of the text was. Not only did we consider what the message was, but the class also discussed what the secondary message (intended or not) that the visual/textual piece allowed the audience to draw. This second aspect was not one that I planned for, but it was an interesting way to get students to consider that their audience has assumptions of their own.

       Rhetoric and design. When discussing what mode students wanted to develop their argument in two key issues arose.

       #1: What does the thesis demand from the structure of this piece?

       In other words, if the consulting firm wanted to critique the use of overt visual sexuality in one image, would that be best accomplished by a website, a video, or a poster/ flyer/pamphlet series?

       #2: What level of comfort do students have with the software on hand to create these kinds of documents?

This second questions was an issue I expected, but the answer appeared to be that students would make whatever mode they chose work for them. Several of them indicated this was one of the more interesting aspects of the class, getting to learn new software by using it.

Process Pedagogy. The final part of my focus for this assignment was more for me than for students. As I considered how to keep my course within the bounds of more traditional academic expectations I decided that process pedagogy was a good model for developing a project of this type. By requiring students to invest time and document their planning stages, I learned the valuable lesson that most instructors already know: Students will complain…but in the long run it will help. Students really objected to what on the surface appeared to be busy work. However, as the class progressed and they had to actually start to construct their final product, they were pleased to have the planning meeting documents to draw on.

Frame Experiment ReDux

Looking back I see that this second assignment came closer to what I view now as *really* using multimodal composing (and I will talk about what this distinction is more completely later) in the composition classroom. I felt that using the Web 2.0 software in a way that complimented the knowledge my students brought the classroom helped open up a new direction for my teaching and classes that I do not think I would have pursued otherwise. The real reason for this change was that I realized, as I always said I did…but perhaps never really did, that I did not have to be the sole source of knowledge in my classroom.

Student reactions to this assignment varied as well. On instance of note is that my students followed the same pattern as they did in the other classes with my colleagues who used the assignment as well. As noted above, most of the student chose to create a web portfolio as the final project even though they had the options to use other modes. There could be several reasons

for this, however, as it was not part of the focus of this assignment I can only speculate based on the anecdotal evidence gathered in the end of course reflections. As in the music video assignments students remarked that aspects of the assignment were interesting, but they did not always see the purpose of using media in the assignment. The few students who did like the challenge of using new tools remarked that they enjoyed the challenge it presented to them.

Watching my students create a visual/textual argument with tools they were not familiar with pushed me to rely more on their knowledge to help each other along. This assignment really helped me tune into the fact that students were indeed interested in learning about this weird mixture of visual and textual composing. I also began to avidly pursue just how to quantify and define what it was that I wanted students to gain from assignments like this. The more I delved into the difference between using media in the classroom and composing multimodally I found there are some camps that staunchly proclaim the use of one as better than the other. I was cautious though, so I wanted to learn more of course before proceeding with this line of instruction. With that in mind I sought out experts and those more experienced than I in this area of scholarship and practice. What I learned on that part of my journey was even more challenging than I expected, but was also more rewarding too.

Composing a Multimodal Dissertation

Reflections on using multimodal composition for academic practice

~~Risk and Scholarly Anxiety ~~

This entry explores the anxiety I encountered as I made the decision to enter into a new aspect of scholarship. As a junior scholar there are already a myriad of anxieties regarding academic work that are present when seeking an aspect of your chosen field to specialize in. My choosing to work in multimodal composing and the rhetorical, practical aspects of that field only helped add to the normal level of anxiety present for most graduate students.

The difficulty in working on what some may consider the bleeding edge of a field can either limit or encourage scholarly growth. In my own department there were a broad range of responses and levels of resistance to my interest in this area. I was fortunate to be in a program that allowed and encouraged me to explore multimodal composing as it related to the composition and rhetoric field. In addition to that encouragement I was able to seek out mentors in other areas (by attending DMAC, working as an assistant editor for Kairos, and attending the Computers and Composition conference).

My first frame experiment in the First Year Composition classroom (see chapter 2 for details) also helped me begin to build an understanding of what multimodal composition was. Grounded in a rhetoric and composition background and building on my own instructional experience I began to explore the variety of definitions the term multimodal composing encompasses.

During this exploration and development of a scholarly understanding of some parts of this field, I began to encounter typical objections to the importance of analyzing and creating multimodal texts. The most frequent objection that was raised in my conversations with other instructors and my colleagues was that media cannot be used for serious scholarship. My initial impulse was to agree and I began my encounters with multimedia in the classroom as a way to increase student engagement within the course. During this time frame I used media for students to analyze rhetorically (music videos; satirical cartoons, videos; commercials). However, as I began to explore the texts of C. Selfe, Ball, Wysocki, Rice, and Stroupe I realized this is not necessarily the only way to use media.

As I began to make my own multimodal compositions, Ball's assertion that "form and content are inseparable in authors' scholarly multimedia" (2012, p. 61) influenced my own instructional practice more and more. Reflecting on the ways that analysis and production of multimodal texts allow readers/viewers and author/composers to utilize different skills helped shape the frame experiments in

Based on this experience, when I began to develop a composition strategy for this dissertation, I knew that it would be important to demonstrate in the final product the lessons learned along the way in this academic and personal journey. I acknowledge that this multimodal text is a risky way to approach such a high stakes investment as a dissertation. However I do not believe any other mode of telling these lessons would have been as productive.

BLOG ARCHIVE

#1 – Metanarrative
#2 – Scholarly Anxiety
#3 – Message and Design
#4 – Collaboration
#5 – Future Practice

CHAPTER III

CONNECTIONS OF MODE, MESSAGE, AND DESIGN

A New Instructional Environment

As I reached my final semesters of teaching at Oklahoma State University, I began to realize that

I wanted to teach something not only relevant to the academic lives of my students, but also

something that would be useful outside of collegiate environments. When given the opportunity

to instruct a Technical Writing course I gladly accepted and was presented with the unique

instructional considerations of that field. Gathering all my previous experience with working in

both corporate and professional environments, I developed a semester-long sequence of

assignments that I felt would fulfill the requirements of the course, interest my students, and also

incorporate the use of multi-modal composing in a way that was appropriate for technical

writing.

For this frame experiment, my goal was to reexamine the traditional way the course was

instructed; therefore I chose not to use the optional course packet that required a series of

standard technical documents. Instead I spent a good deal of my instructional preparation

analyzing what those documents were and finding ways to incorporate these genres into a

sequence that would result in both alphabetic and media texts. To accomplish this, I began to

develop a strategy for step two of this frame experiment by drawing on my background

knowledge of incorporating multimodal composing and other experience in the classroom, I began to select a focus for the technical documents to be used throughout the course.

During this time I considered several options, but I finally settled on working with a public service announcement (PSA) campaign for several reasons. The first reason was that I believed that it would offer students enough latitude to investigate a problem that interested them. Using a public service announcement as the foundation for my course offered some aspects of what is termed service learning, an approach to writing that is popular among composition classes as well. The concept of service learning is explicated fully in a variety of sources (see Tate, Rupiper, Schick (2001) for a brief overview) but I will only examine the aspects that directly relate to this project here. As it relates to this assignment sequence, service learning can be defined as:

> A form of active pedagogy that involves students in activities that both provide service to a community and engage students in an experience where they acquire knowledge, skills, or perspectives that broaden or deepen their understanding of a particular concept of subject matter. (Jeavons, 1995, p. 135)

There are several ways that the following assignment sequence works toward achieving this goal. These are explained in detail at the appropriate place in the sequence.

By working both service learning and multimodal composing approaches into the technical writing classroom I hoped to help students connect with the requirements of the documents dictated by the curriculum for the course. I hoped that incorporating general principles of what a public service announcement was would also connect students to content outside of a simulated rhetorical situation. For me the quintessential PSA has always been the "The more you know" spots that NBC airs on social concerns with topics ranging from

environmental to health issues for as long as I can remember; so…that is where I started my instructional planning.

Pedagogical Practice and the Workplace

As in previous narratives I will focus on the development and execution of the composing tasks set before students in order to examine how multimodal composing might work in this environment. I began to develop the semester long sequence of assignments (required by step four of the frame experiment) that would culminate in a digital multimodal portfolio. During this time I started to fully appreciate the complexities of digital multimodal composing and began to think more critically about WHY students needed the skills offered by composing multimodally. At this point in my own pedagogical development I began to agree more and more with Ball (2012) and her assertion that the connections between form and content are directly linked to an author's message and that this is "an important concept for students to learn and practice in an age when multimedia is ubiquitous" (p. 61). I think the major shift for me between the first frame experiment and this assignment sequence was the motivation for creating the sequence. In my first attempt using the music video I was motivated by the desire to make my class more interesting and to use media to achieve increased student interest. In the second attempt, using the webtext, I was still casting about for what exactly multimodal composing could offer students. This technical writing frame experiment is more intentionally focused on drawing on theoretical perspectives from BOTH traditional alphabetic composing (like process based composing, the student centered classroom, using workshops and peer review, etc.) and digital multimodal composing (creating media products as a part of the sequence). These are further examined more in-depth in the following section.

Classroom Goals

The purpose of the technical writing classroom, as I was trained to understand it, is to equip students to work in a variety of environments. Students may go on from the class to become subject matter experts who need to do either a small or large amount of technical writing throughout their careers. Alternatively students may continue on from the class to become professional, technical writers who specialize in the writing of technical documentation. My interactions with other instructors with experience teaching the course made me aware that because this was an upper division (junior/senior level) class, students were already specialized in a field that they had a hard time collectively approaching a subject from a general perspective. Taking all of this into account, I decided to create a semester long simulation environment that would accomplish three specific goals. These goals were:

1) Emulate a real world work environment,

2) Scaffold skills required for composing, and

3) Increase student involvement.

The intent of these three goals was to find ways to use a technical writing course sequence to allow students to both learn and apply skills for technical or professional writing environments.

Goal 1: Emulate a Real World Work Environment

The first goal was established to help students learn how to work on a long term project BOTH individually and cooperatively in a group. Professional writing environments frequently require the ability to move between individual and collaborative work on a single project. During this time, technical writers are responsible for meeting established deadlines and assisting colleagues in meeting their own goals. Based on my previous classroom experience I was aware that students often object to what is perceived as the unfair nature of group projects. This complaint

is especially raised when all group members get the same grade for often a different amount of work, or at the very least, contribution to the project. Therefore I wanted the assignment sequence to take into account the more realistic fact that a large group project is constructed of several small pieces, and not every member will work on every piece. At the same time I had to find a way to strike a balance in assessment that would still allow group members more individual control over their final grade.

To accomplish this I divided the documents required by the Oklahoma State University (OSU) assignment sequence into two groups, those that were individually produced and submitted and others that were collectively produced and submitted. Table 3.1 (next page) provides an overview of the assignments, a point breakdown, and notes which assignments were individual and which were assessed as a group effort.

In my overall grading rubric I attempted to balance the amount of points each of these documents allowed students to earn. That way any individual's lack of contribution would only add to or detract from their own grade, not the group's; and also no collective effort would impact the individual grade so much that it would swing their grade out of proportion with their own effort and work. In this point-based system, group submitted work could potentially allow a student to receive a 70% in the course (if work was perfect every time). However, in order to achieve more than this, individuals needed to exceed expectations in the other documents and daily participation assignments.

The need for this approach was drawn from my own experience working in the cooperative professional writing environment. On the one hand, in a professional environment everyone receives a paycheck, no matter what amount of effort each team member puts in. However, other non-tangible benefits are given to co-workers (raises, travel opportunities,

professional development, etc.) that excel in their role. By setting up the assessment rubrics in this way, I attempted to reflect this real world balance in final grades.

Table 3.1

Assignment Sequence – Points, Individual vs Group Assessment

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	Assessment
Introduction Letter	10	Individual
PSA Campaign		
➢ Problem Report	30	Individual
➢ Short Reports	90	Individual
o Work Log		Individual
o Progress Report		Group
o Usability Recommendation		
➢ Abstracts	90	Group
o w/Proposal		Group
o w/PFP/Audio/Video		Group
o w/Instructions		
➢ Audience Analysis	90	Group
o w/Proposal		Group
o w/PFP/Audio/Video		Group
o w/Instructions		
➢ Proposal	100	Group
➢ Poster, flyer, pamphlet OR Audio OR Video	100	Group
➢ Instructions	50	Group
➢ Website	100	Group
➢ PSA Presentation and handout	50	Group
➢ PSA Campaign evaluation memo	20	Individual
Resume & Application letter	50	Individual
Module quizzes (12 total, drop the lowest 4)	80	Individual
Participation	100	Individual
Final: Self evaluation memo	40	Individual
TOTAL	1000	
TOTAL Individually possible	390	
TOTAL Group possible	700	

Goal 2: Scaffold Skills Required for Composing

My second goal for this sequence of assignments was to work at scaffolding the composing skills of my students more specifically than I had in earlier uses of media as a component of my class. Scaffolding has a variety of meanings in educational practice. Sawyer (2006) summarizes the concept of instructional scaffolding as support provided during learning with the goal of helping the student reach the instructional objective of the course or assignment. Scaffolding can be provided in a variety of ways during course instruction. In this instance scaffolding was presented in two ways by the assignment sequence. The first application of the concept was based on the principle that students should build from familiar to new composing methods. In other words, the course began with mostly alphabetic texts and progressed toward incorporating multimodal composing as students became more comfortable with the skills required for that task.

The second application of this concept directly related to reaching the point where students were able to choose the composing mode best suited to the message of their text. As is illustrated in the assignment sheets below, early tasks dictated to students what mode the assignment should be submitted in. However as the course progressed, students were required to make this decision more independently. Guided practice was provided through audience analysis grids and direct feedback during class time, however in later assignments this feedback was given by fellow students more and less by the instructor.

A third method of scaffolding was incorporated into the course through the use of a process approach to each individual assignment. As illustrated in the assignment sheets annotated below, each assignment in the sequence was developed through guided practice and smaller assignments. The sequence incorporated both formal and informal opportunities for

revision, feedback, and time for questions on each aspect of the assignment. By allowing students to become comfortable with both technological and rhetorical composing choices slowly and over time, I felt that students would be able to gain a better understanding of how design and message are inextricably intertwined.

When the course required primarily alphabetic exercises, classroom discussions focused on how we could translate that same message into a media text without changing the intent. These early discussions started students looking at the ways that messages could be communicated in a variety of modes. We also spent several class sessions looking at examples of PSAs and analyzing the rhetorical situation of the specific mode used. Students developed a feel for what they determined were the basic types of PSAs were and decided that their assignment should fit the conventions of these genres. Based on examples that both students and I brought for discussion, students decided that they wanted to work in two main categories for the PSA campaign. These were PSA that targeted either 1) targeted changing behavior or 2) a created a shift in attitude. In addition to these guidelines established by the classroom discussion, students developed the PSA media checklist collaboratively during class time (see Appendix C for specifics). This participation in the development of the course was directly tied to the next goal.

Goal 3: Increase Student Involvement

My third goal developed out of lessons that I had learned in my previous frame experiments. This lesson was that students often had more skill at showing classmates new composing skills (both rhetorically and practically with technology) than the best laid lesson plans I could prepare. This is not to say that I did not outline a course plan and provide documents as a basis for my instruction, but I had learned to allow for more student-to-student interaction during my classes.

There were several ways that I tried to include this in the sequence of assignments. The first was that students self-selected the topic for their initial problem report. Then, after reading the reports of their classmates they sent me a top three list of the ideas they would be interested in working on further and I created groups based on that interest. This was both a connection to the service-learning aspect of the course and a move toward grouping students in a way that would allow more communication. The service learning aspect was incorporated through students choosing problems from within the community of practice they hoped to join professionally after graduation (the assignment required a report based on a problem in their major). By allowing some level of self-selection in the groups, students had a common ground basis to start from when developing cohesive work units.

Another way I tried to allow students to guide the course was that throughout the semester students would evaluate, individually and collectively, the work of classmates. For example, Group A would perform usability testing on Group B's web portfolio. Group A would then submit their feedback in memo form to me (which was a graded assignment for that group). I would review their feedback, add any other pertinent information, and then pass it along to Group B. In this way I was able to not only allow students to compose projects on subjects they found interesting, they also were the ones establishing the assessment criteria for a final product. While I created several rubrics to assess student work, we also had class discussions about what each of the general criteria could mean and how to best evaluate them. Then as students gave feedback to their classmates, they helped establish how they interpreted that standard. This alerted me early on in the composing process to any inconsistencies or misunderstandings the students may have had. In these cases I could then address these issues earlier than the final draft stage, when it is too late for students to make adjustments. This approach also allowed students

to select what comments to apply and which to disregard in revisions. Because the group receiving the comments did not know which were mine and which were the comments of classmates, what corrections they chose to may have been motivated more by the desire to improve their text rather than to simply change what the instructor said they should.[23]

The last way I tried to incorporate more student involvement into the class was to allow students to choose among three different modes for their PSA. Because I wanted students to create digital media I restricted their choices to a 30 second video clip, a series of three 10-15 second audio clips, or a poster/flyer/pamphlet series. I will revisit how each of these targets actually came into focus during the class after I walk through the sequence of assignments in the following section.

Developing Course Specifics

To prepare for teaching this section of Technical Writing I started with the traditional curriculum sequence assigned by OSU's English Department. In discussions with other colleagues I became aware of another instructor's approach to the course that allowed students to explore writing technical documents through the creation of an original game and the texts required to support its marketing. This approach was intriguing to me, but I wanted to develop an assignment sequence that was more closely tied to the chosen careers of potential students, included the goals of service learning, and incorporated multimodal composing practices.

Assignment Formatting: Memos

Having established the decision to work in the framework of the PSA genre and that of a professional writing work environment, I chose to frame course assignments as a supervisor might to an intern. Selecting the memo format (shown in the assignment sheets below) seemed

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[23] While commenting is not a focus of this project, this is an issue I would like to continue to explore.

logical because it would allow the assignment to communicate all the necessary information needed, while keeping in line with the work environment I tried to create in the classroom. This document type also allowed me to model the type of structure and organization students could use in their own correspondence among groups and in other class required communications.

Skills Sequencing

When developing the assignment sequence, I drew once again on the traditional documents required by the university and added in my own instructional and work experience. While there were various daily and other low stakes assignments used along the way, this project will focus on the nine PSA campaign assignments. These are the focus of this narrative because they represent the variety of technical writing documents required by the university and also illustrate the type of scaffolding needed to help students learn more about the concept of technical writing through the creation of their PSA. The following assignment sheets include specific annotations that describe assessment, mode of composition, and ways the assignment was intended to create opportunities for student involvement; all of which connect to the larger goals of the course.

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Problem Report*

Problem Report

For this assignment you will choose an issue in your area of study that presents a problem. This issue can be directly or marginally related to your field, but it should interest you in some way. Your research should contain enough reputable sources to give a complete picture of the causes of the problem. Keep careful track of your sources, they will be useful in later stages of this project.

You will report your findings to the class using a modified format of the **Investigative Report** found in your textbook. We will discuss the modifications you may need to make in the next few class sessions. This report will be posted to the D2L discussion board by **Friday Feb. 19th** at **5pm**. **(20 points)**

Read your classmates reports over the weekend. Then before midnight on Sunday Feb. 22nd you will email Miss Burnside with your top 3 topics you are interested in investigating further **(10 points)**. PSA groups will be assigned in class on Monday Feb. 22nd.

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

❖ Gerson & Gerson pgs. 473-482

❖ What is a PSA powerpoint on D2L

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Proposal*

Proposal

For this assignment **YOUR GROUP** will write ONE proposal outlining your PROPOSED approach to the PSA Campaign you are a part of. You will need to modify the structure of a proposal as outlined on page 547 of our company style manual (Gerson & Gerson). The final draft of this internal proposal must contain the following items, due as noted below:

Audience Analysis grid (due **Feb. 24th** in class)   30 points

Abstract (due **March 1st** at **midnight**)   30 points

Report (due **March 3rd** at **midnight**)   100 points
Introduction
        including a clear purpose statement (see pg 549)
Problem
        a deeper exploration of the original problem report
Discussion
        what approach will you take to the PSA?
Conclusion/Recommendations
        what outside sources do you still need, who will your target audience be,
        what media do you think you will use, etc.

Miss Burnside will review your proposal and approve it **OR** make recommendations for revision before your group proceeds.
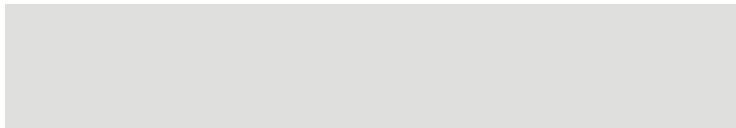
Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

- ❖ Gerson & Gerson's proposal checklist (pg. 552)

- ❖ Any resources from the original problem report you can locate

- ❖ Group organizational meeting form

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Media Text*

Media Text

For this assignment **YOUR GROUP** will create a PSA Campaign that meets the needs of **BOTH** your primary and secondary audience. You will need to follow the document design guidelines discussed in class and Gerson & Gerson. The final draft of the text must contain the following items, due as noted below:

Audience Analysis grid (due **March 7th** at **midnight**)   30 points

Abstract (due **March 8th** in class)   30 points

Media Text Final draft (due **March 12th** at **midnight**) 100 points

Text choices

Your group has the choice of producing:

- a poster, flyer, and pamphlet series,

- 3 **AUDIO** PSA's of at least 10 seconds length each, or

- 1 **VIDEO** PSA of at least 30 seconds length

More details about each required text are posted on D2L.

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

- ❖ Gerson & Gerson's chapter on persuasive communication and document design (Chp. 13)

- ❖ Any resources from the original problem report you need

- ❖ The "What is a PSA" powerpoint on D2L

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Progress Report*

Progress Report

For this assignment each group member will submit a progress report about the PSA Campaign you are working on. This report will follow the format as dictated by Gerson & Gerson (pg. 486). While you may consult your group mates on the overall objectives of the project and the work accomplished to this point each report **MUST** present unique assessments of any problems encountered, the work remaining, and the conclusions/recommendations.

This is your chance to assess how your group is working collaboratively. Think about how you are interacting with other group members. Is the way you have split the work to this point been productive? Have you had difficulty meeting deadlines? Why/Why not?

BE HONEST! This should be an honest assessment of your group's dynamics and should not just simply state that everything is going well. Miss Burnside cannot help address any issues within the group if these reports are not honest. However, keep in mind honesty does not mean tattling. Use the persuasive techniques discussed in Chapter 13 to help you communicate what you mean without being rude.

This report is due **March 10**th at 6:30 pm (before class) but should include work completed in class on Monday March 8th.

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

❖ Gerson & Gerson

❖ Group organizational meeting forms

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Website portfolio and Presentation*

Website portfolio

For this assignment your group will compile relevant documents to present your PSA Campaign to the general public. Your final website will include **REVISED** versions of the: problem report, media text, and set of instructions created by the group. Your website should have AT LEAST four pages (a home page and a page for each of the required sections).

A storyboard of your website will be submitted to the dropbox by midnight on **April 2nd**. (20 points)

A rough draft of your website will be posted to the discussion board by 6:30 pm on **April 7th** in order for usability testing to occur in class. (30 points)

A final draft of the website will be submitted to the dropbox by midnight on **April 26th** and should incorporate the feedback from the recommendation report your group receives. (50 points)

Process

Focused

Presentation and Handout

Your group will also create a 20 minute presentation that explains the need for your PSA Campaign, uses at least ONE media text, and allows for questions from the audience. This presentation must be accompanied by a single handout (it may be double sided) that is appropriate for the needs of the audience. Presentations will be due during class on **April 26th**. (50 points)

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

- ❖ Gerson & Gerson pgs. 396-415 (websites) and 172-196 (presentations)
- ❖ Storyboard hints:
  - o What is a storyboard?
  - o Storyboard blank template on D2L
- ❖ Website hints:
  - o How to use Google Groups to create a website on D2L
  - o MS Publisher
  - o Website design tips on D2L

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment. EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Recommendation Report*

Recommendation Report

For this assignment your group will review the website of another PSA campaign group in class as assigned by Miss Burnside. You will then modify the feasibility/recommendation report format as outlined on page 490 to suggest changes or revisions to the group you have been assigned.

The final draft of this report is due in the dropbox at midnight on **April 9ᵗʰ**. (30 points)

Student Driven Instruction

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

❖ Gerson & Gerson pgs. 486-490

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Instructions*

Instructions
For this assignment your group will write instructions targeted at three specific audiences. Each set of instructions will show how a different target group can incorporate the materials created by your group (the problem report and the media text) with other materials on the same topic.

For example: one set of instructions will show how the materials created by your group can be used in a middle school classroom while another will show how the same materials can be used in an adult learning setting.

Each set of instructions must incorporate at least ONE visual element and incorporate three sources outside of your own material. Each set of instructions should use appropriate highlighting techniques and give a unique approach for the chosen audience.

Draw on the multiple audience analysis grids your group has submitted to come up with specific target groups.

Your group will create an audience analysis grid for each set of instructions and submit them in class on **April 14th**. (30 points)

Your group will bring to class a rough draft of each set of instructions for usability testing on **April 21st**. (20 points)

Your group will create a recommendation memo for another set of instructions due in the dropbox by midnight **April 23rd**. (30 points)

Your group will submit a final set of instructions with the website portfolio in the dropbox by midnight **April 26th**.

Helpful Resources
The following resources could be useful during this process:

❖   Gerson & Gerson pgs. 422-439 (especially the checklist on pg 439)

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *Presentation*

Presentation and Handout

Your group will also create a 20 minute presentation that follows the format explained below. This presentation must be accompanied by a single handout (it may be double sided) that is appropriate for the needs of the audience. Presentations will be due during class on **April 26th**. (50 points)

Each presentation should cover the following areas:

Part 1: Why was your PSA needed? Explain to your classmates the underlying problem or issue that motivated your group to create your PSA documents.

Part 2: What media text style did you choose and why? Explain to your classmates why your chosen media is the best to address the problem, reach your target audience, and help raise awareness/change behavior.

Part 3: How did your group address the project? Explain to your classmates the strategies your group used to accomplish the work surrounding the PSA Campaign. Did you elect a leader, work together as equals, or a combination of these or other methods? How successful was that?

Part 4: Question and Answer: Be prepared to answer questions surrounding your problem, the process of developing your media text, or the work strategies your group chose to employ.

Helpful Resources

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Memorandum

To: ENGL 3323 Interns

From: Miss Elkie Burnside

Date: 4/30/2013

Re: PSA Campaign: *PSA final work log and evaluation memo*

Final Work Log

Every group member will submit an individual final work log that compiles all the work logs into one document. This document should be easily understandable by your supervisor. This may mean you need to use shading, separate tabs, some kind of master key, etc. to explain the time keeping system. Each document should have a master time table that shows the total amount of time spent on each task recorded.

This work log is due in the dropbox at midnight on **April 30th**. (30 points)

Skills
&
Scaffolds

Evaluation Memo

Each group member will submit a PSA Campaign evaluation memo that reports on the overall progress of the group and assess the division of labor throughout the group process. This memo should be addressed to your supervisor and follow the correct memo format as discussed in class. This should be an honest assessment of the entire GROUP process (not your individual progress, that will come later) and will be used to anonymously evaluate group members and their contributions to the project.

This evaluation memo is due in the dropbox at midnight on **April 30th**. (20 points)

Helpful Resources

The following resources could be useful during this process:

❖ Gerson & Gerson pg 270

Feel free to contact me at elkie@okstate.edu if you have any further questions about the assignment.

EB

Results of Course Goals

After the course was completed and I had read all the student reflections, I began to complete the final stages of the frame experiment in an effort to confirm or change my original goal. The goal was to find a way to provide a service learning instructional environment that would incorporate aspects of real world professional writing environments and multimodal composing opportunities for my students. The following analysis considers how the implementation of this plan worked. Again there were three areas of focus that I was able to see as a trend in the classroom and the course overall. As I look at each of my overarching goals for this frame experiment, I find that this one was probably the most successful of the three classroom based narratives.

   Work environment. The first goal I had for the course was to create a process based environment that more accurately portrayed a realistic professional writing work environment. While there are limitations of the classroom that prevent truly creating this kind of workspace, there were a few aspects that I was able to draw into the assignment sequence. The first was using a collaboration model that more closely mirrored a workplace. Instead of the entire group being responsible for every document, I encouraged (and at times required) students to work on pieces individually and then submit them to the group for evaluation before turning in the final product. The second way I incorporated this goal was to teach the class using short bursts of instructional time accompanied by workshop time in which I circulated throughout the room to answer questions and help troubleshoot problems. This more closely models the professional development offered in professional work environments. Rather than extended instructional courses, professional development (learning new concepts) is frequently offered through a workshop or conference model. The learner is immersed in a new theory or idea and then takes that information back to the work environment to apply it. In this way the micro-

lesson/application model used for this class helped begin to prepare students for this shift in learning opportunities.

Skills and scaffolds. Scaffolding of knowledge is not a new concept. However in this sequence of assignments, in the entire class really, I wanted to not only build on my student's previous knowledge of writing, but also on their previous encounters with multimodal composing. I achieved this by starting the conversation off at a conceptual level (i.e. "Is this the only way to tell this message?" or "How can we translate this message from its existing form to another?") before moving to a practical level ("Now convey your message multimodally"). I used this method because I felt that students would be more willing to move along that continuum slowly instead of trying to jump straight in as I had with previous assignments. Because I looked at the course as an entire sequence in this instance, I felt as if I had more time to build up to this knowledge without losing out on the skills I wanted students to gain from the class. As shown in the previous assignment sheet annotations, students were also allowed to build from alphabetic to multimodal composing methods throughout the course with guidance and feedback along the way. In my opinion this also helped students be more willing to learn how to compose multimodal texts.

Student involvement. My previous work with incorporating multimodal composing into courses had taught me that students were an excellent resource in the classroom. In order to allow more student involvement, students functioned as the driving force in several ways. The first was that all the PSA campaigns were based off an initial problem report. The focus of each report was self-selected by a student and then students grouped based on self-identified interests. I also drew on the students to give specific feedback to their classmates during peer review sessions. By making this feedback an assigned document it encouraged students to look for

information in a more complete way and students returned more than the surface level "everything is great" feedback peer review can sometimes generate. I continued the theme of student choice by requiring students to pick the best mode for their PSA campaign.

Confirmation

Reflection on the results of this frame experiment leads me to believe that this approach was successful in achieving my goal to incorporate service learning, multimodal composition, and a professional work environment in a way useful to students. Not only did students at the time see success in my course, several mentioned applying these skills in other courses and receiving positive feedback from other instructors. A few students wrote after the class ended indicating they either secured jobs or were placed in leadership positions during internships due to skills learned in this course. In addition, other students emailed that they secured internships (and in one case became a group leader at the internship) because of the skills learned through this course.

Overall I believe this frame experiment is a confirmation that it is possible to create a technical writing course using service learning, multimodal composition, and aspects of a professional writing work environment. It was a success in teaching relevant professional writing techniques and allowed students to learn about both multimodal composition and a specific community issue in a way other instructional methods may not allow. While there are minor modifications I would make to daily instructional organization and low stakes assessment methods, I will keep the larger assignment sequence the same when I am able to teach this course again.

Composing a Multimodal Dissertation

Reflections on using multimodal composition for academic practice

~~Mode, Message, and Design ~~

This entry briefly traces how I came to the decision to use an interactive PDF as the final mode for my dissertation. Once I had made the decision to create a multimodal text, I had to consider what mode would be most appropriate for the message I wanted to communicate. The frame experiment in the Technical Writing instructional setting (see chapter 3 for details) helped me begin to understand the ways in which message and mode influence one another.

My goal for my dissertation was to find a way to communicate my narrative using the most appropriate objects to allow readers to fully understand the message and lessons learned through these experiences. To that end I wanted the final dissertation to be an example of scholarly multimedia as defined by Ball (2012). She asserts that "Scholarly multimedia cannot be printed and still retain the author's argument because such texts are composed of Web pages with links, animations, images, audio, video, scripting languages, databases, and other multimedia and interactive elements, including but not limited to written text" (p. 62). I knew based on conversations with my advisory committee and representatives of the graduate college at my institution that a completely web-based document would not be an acceptable final product.

Operating under these constraints I reviewed and discussed several options on how I could achieve my goal. At one time I considered making two separate dissertations. One would be the multimodal text I really wanted and the other would be an alphabetic transliteration to satisfy the academic genre expectations of the institution. Faced with the magnitude of work this method would present, I decided against it almost immediately.

In my own research and experience with other multimodal scholarship I had only ever seen web-based work and at one point became discouraged that I would never find a method to use. My moment of inspiration came during C. Selfe's presentation at DMAC on using Microsoft Word that encouraged participants to think outside of traditional uses. I began to consider non-traditional ways to use composing methods that traditionally supported alphabetic texts.

It is from this that I developed the idea to use an interactive PDF as the final mode for this text. For me there are three reasons this method is ideal to communicate the information it contains.

1) It has the ability to combine both alphabetic and media texts in a single document. My composing process is to create the information in a Word document and then create a PDF of the final draft in order to embed the videos and flash objects.

2) It can meet the final submission guidelines of the university. When discussing the final size with graduate college representatives, we came to the compromise that the videos could be either uploaded separately or be replaced with messages to contact the author for the objects. This would reduce the size to an acceptable range.

3) It is a common and widespread delivery method that the committee members and other readers could use. While some systems do not have the ability to allow external linking to videos and other media, the self-contained nature of the PDF helps reduce viewing difficulties (although nothing can truly eliminate all difficulties completely).

Having established these aspects of the project, I was able to develop a final text that achieved my goal of using the best artifacts and reflections to share the narratives found throughout this project.

BLOG ARCHIVE

#1 – Metanarrative
#2 – Scholarly Anxiety
#3 – Message and Design
#4 – Collaboration
#5 – Future Practice

CHAPTER IV

VISUAL RHETORIC IN TECHNICAL TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS

Fire Protections Publications Needs a New PowerPoint® Style

The final narrative and frame experiment developed while I worked as a part-time student

assistant at Fire Protection Publications (FPP)[24]. I started working for this publishing house after

the third year of my doctoral program. Like many graduate students, I needed summer

employment and was happy to find a job that meshed with both my experience and interests

enough to be engaging. What I did not expect when I accepted the position was that I would

begin to contribute to the overall direction of the curricular components developed to train

firefighters as a part of the educational package produced by the company. Specifically I want to

more closely examine how my research and use of multimodal composition offered me the

opportunity to develop a new digital presentation style for curriculum packages.

The lessons I learned while teaching students to compose in a variety of modes for the

classroom helped me not only effectively develop the new style created by FPP's market

demands, but it also allowed me to create a style guide that would effectively teach that style to

other Instructional Developers, and promote ways to use this style in the fire service classroom.

The following section provides background information on the curriculum components

created for each package FPP develops and is provided to help the reader fully understand the

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[24] All visuals in this chapter are property of Fire Protection Publications, Copyright © 2013 by the Board of Regents, Oklahoma State University

need for the changes explored in this frame experiment. The remainder of this narrative investigates the theoretical issues at the core of this change and how these changes were communicated to internal and external users of the presentations. Because this situation was not based in a classroom, the composing tasks examined in the following narrative are the development of a style and style guide for use by internal instructional developers and the user documentation created to help FPP customers use the resulting new style of components. This documentation takes the form of both written help files and articles, but also includes instructor and student videos on how to use the materials in the training classroom.

FPP Curriculum Practices

FPP produces a core curriculum package with each A- and B- level manuals (identified by sales) that consists of the following components:

1) Lesson outline – Contains the core learning objects, manual content, and review questions for each chapter

2) PowerPoint® (PPT) presentation – Visualizes the content of the lesson outline

3) Chapter Quiz – Assesses in 10-15 questions the core learning objectives

4) Chapter Test – Assesses the core learning objectives in a longer format than the quiz

5) Workbook – Provides students with a self-paced tool to review chapter content

Curriculum packages may also include several optional pieces of information. These consist of an exam prep (provides certification test preparation); skill evaluation checklists (gives instructors assessment tools correlated to the psychomotor skill sheets in the manual, these activities have a specific step-by-step sequence); and learning activities (provides activities to review and reinforce cognitive skills that do not have one way to accomplish the goal). While working with the Curriculum Division on developing these materials I was approached by my

supervisor (Mr. K.) with a problem. He stated that the Marketing Division had been receiving

feedback from FPP's customer base that the digital presentations were not adequately meeting

the training needs of instructors and students. As in any business, this was of concern because

this meant that customers were turning elsewhere for materials, which impacts the financial

bottom line. Mr. K. knew of my interest in the way that technology is changing in classrooms

and came to ask if I knew of any alternative ways that we could present the information.

Intrigued by the challenge of applying my knowledge of multimodal composing in a different

forum I agreed to see what I could think of.

Customer Critiques and Constraints

As with my other frame experiments, I started the process of creating a context by examining

specific customer complaints. FPP did not at the time have a way to gather specifics from

customers, but the common anecdotal complaints collected at trade shows and conferences were

summarized in the following.

> Customers stated that FPP PPTs:
>
> 1) Are boring – Customers cited that there was not enough visually to even motivate
> instructors to use them.
>
> 2) Have too much text – Customers did not like that the presentations seemed to be
> nothing but slide after slide of TEXT.
>
> 3) Do not interest students – Customers reported that students did not pay attention
> during the instructional time that accompanied the presentation.

Not only did I hear of these critiques, I also met instructors from Oklahoma Fire Service

Training that chose to reuse presentations from previous versions of curriculum (even though the

content was not exactly the same) simply because the textual (old) style was not meeting their instructional needs.

Taking these critiques into consideration I began to think about various approaches to digital presentations. The main goal of this curriculum component is established as a way for instructors to relay the cognitive portion of learning objectives to students. FPP curricular packages are designed for instructors to use all or part of the components as needed to help students understand complex technical knowledge regarding various fire service topics. This can act a constraint in many ways because this shell type curriculum has to fit the needs of over thirty manuals, each with a specific training audience. These target groups can range from beginning firefighters to those more advanced in the fire service, such as fire officers; and at times will even encompass specialized audiences like Hazardous Materials First Responders or Pumping Apparatus Driver/Operators. So I knew whatever solution I developed would have to meet the needs of all of these audiences.

Another factor that I had to consider when looking to revise the PPT style was that FPP curriculum has to be useable directly *out of the box*. What I mean by this is that frequently instructors will be schedule to teach a course and then the day before (sometimes even the morning of) an emergency will occur and a substitute will be needed as the original instructor has to respond to the situation. This is also reciprocated in that students may be paged away from course instruction time for the same reason – this is quite different from academic instruction. Typically in an academic environment absences, especially of the instructor, are planned for in advance. This constraint meant that whatever style for the PPT developed would have to be immediately useable, even by an instructor NOT familiar with the material at all.

Prezi as a Possible Solution

At this point I moved forward with all of this information in hand. I knew that customers did not like the current style of PPT because it was too text heavy and not interesting to students. I also knew that any modifications had to keep in mind the variety of audiences required for all FPP curriculum projects and the need for immediate usage of any materials developed. At this point in my scholarly pursuits I had just become aware of the flash-based presentation tool of Prezi. I considered the opportunity that this program offered to and show the relationships of concepts in a more visual way. I knew that a completed Prezi could be downloaded and distributed on a flashdrive or DVD (the main two methods of FPP distribution at the time). At this juncture I approached Mr. K. and a FPP Senior Editor (Mr. C.) about the possibility of using Prezi to meet the changing market needs. I was given the green light to turn one chapter of a current PPT into a Prezi for a fire service instructor Level I (Instructor) course. Mr. K. had contacted the instructor for the course and he was willing to try Prezi out on a trial basis. At this time I developed the presentation shown in Video 4.1 (next page). In it I attempted to retain the content of the original PPT while making the information more visually interesting for students. This was my first attempt at positing a possible change that would be beneficial for students and instructors.

The Prezi was received in the Instructor course with mixed reviews. As a part of my position at FPP (and my upcoming shift from part-time to full-time employee) I was enrolled as a student in this instructor course so I got to hear the feedback firsthand. After the class covered the chapter using the Prezi Mr. K. came down and held a brief discussion with students and the instructor on their opinion of the presentation. Some students liked the variety the Prezi offered, however many of them criticized the fact that the presentation did not really **need** to be in this format. The students were not sure that there was really much difference in the way the instructor

presented the information (compared to when he used the PPT). The instructor himself admitted that the only change was that he had to prepare a bit more and make sure he knew the path the Prezi was going to take (which was actually a drawback for him). The consensus appeared to be that it was an interesting take, but that there was no real change in the factors that customers had presented as problems before. (See Video 4.1[25] and caption on next page for an overview of these issues.)

Video 4.1
This video briefly explores the issues that Prezi presented when trying to make the transition from textual slides to a different style. While initially it seems Prezi may be the best option to switch to, it became apparent that in the long run it would not be the answer that would best suit the needs of our target users, Fire Service Instructors and Students.

TRANSCRIPT

While I was in the Instructor course, I also became aware of more constraints that I had not understood before. The first was that many fire service instructors are intimidated by technology (much like their academic counterparts). Several expressed concern about even being able to use PPT in the sample presentation we were required to give as a part of meeting the class learning objectives. I began to consider how the intimidation factor of using a Prezi might impact the way instructors would use FPP products. It was odd to have to shift to think of the financial bottom line as a factor influencing my decision making process, but there is no denying that it

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[25] Created by Burnside, E – Not FPP copyright

did at this point. The fact that customers would not use our products if they were afraid of it meant that Prezi might not be the ideal solution after all.

I continued to discuss the issue with both Mr. K and Mr. C. In these discussions I expressed my concern that Prezi might not be the best method because FPP manuals cover such a wide variety of topics, that the ability to visually express relationships was not required for many of the training objectives used in the curriculum. In the Instructor course for example, listing types of seating arrangements did not require visual-spatial relationships. While the ability to express the relationship between hazardous materials situations and selection of personal protective equipment (PPE) might benefit from a visual representation, these isolated instances were not enough to push other content into a form that did not work. Mr. K and Mr. C. both indicated that they trusted in my experience as a multimodal scholar and were willing to try other solutions that I might be interested in developing.

Another issue that became apparent while I was taking the Instructor course was that the current style of PPT encouraged the poor classroom practice of reading from the slides. Because the text on the slide was all encompassing, the instructors of courses using these materials did not actually instruct. Instead the teacher simply read the information from the slide, occasionally incorporating personal anecdotes or locally specific information. As a student this created for me a classroom experience that made me dread being in class. Because training environments often work on an eight hour work schedule, this was a practice that any revision needed to discourage if at all possible. The Prezi presentation did not really help address this issued and thus this goal was added to the others. In the end, all of these issues, coupled with the fact that FPP could not sell Prezi presentations as a part of curriculum packages resulted in a change of direction for this project. An assessment of this plan began to show me that I would need to change my strategy in

order to achieve the goal of this frame experiment to provide new and more relevant instructional

presentations for FPP customers.

Taking a New Approach with the Same Tools

As my advisors in this project and I realized that Prezi was not going to offer the solution we had

initially hoped, I began to cast about for other solutions to the need for a new PPT style. At this

juncture an article came to my attention through a colleague who knew of my interest in

multimodal composing and this specific problem I was working on. According to Mackiewicz

(2008) students view PPT presentations they designed as ways to put into practice the advice of

technical experts. Mackiewicz summarizes the advice of industry experts in three main points.

Experts advise PPT creators to:

1) Simplify – Decrease information on the slides; do not read text off the slides

2) Use visual elements – Ensure these elements are not simply decorative

3) Use animation sparingly (pp. 152-155).

While this information is helpful, she notes that "experts' tips do guide presenters through the

difficult task of narrowing and selecting content for presentations" (p. 158). In order to better

assess what student's believed good PPTs were Mackiewicz uses survey based research to

compile student opinions on composing useful presentations. She found that student opinions

were similar to that of experts with a few specific differences. According to her research students

believe that good PPTs should:

1) State the slide's main idea clearly

2) Limit text

3) Use relevant visuals

4) Limit animation – Specifically students suggest to only use in in transitioning between slides (pp. 158-161)

The aim of her study, to compare "experts' advice and students' opinions" (p.157) on PPT presentations became the new starting point for the FPP redesign. Based on this information I developed a new strategy for this task. This plan was centered on a PPT style that emphasized communicating the main idea of the slide, using relevant visuals, and adding the instructional component of student interaction into the classroom environments.

Active Learning Strategies

As I began to develop a new style for FPP's curriculum PPTs it became apparent that I would be making the switch from part-time employment to full-time employment. As a part of this change I began to take more ownership in the problem and there was a slight shift in the way that I approached finding the solution. In all honesty rather than approaching it from a *how can I make it more interesting* angle, I began to think about the issue from a *what would I like to teach and/or experience in a training classroom* angle. As I collaborated with my co-worker, Miss H., on what we felt were the drawbacks of our current style from an educational perspective, we decided that the current text-heavy approach to PPT did not acknowledge the various ways that learning can vary based on student interest and personal preference. Our conversations at this juncture considered the idea that firefighters often privilege action and kinesthetic movement over more passive modes of interaction. We believed that a classroom in which these students were required to sit for hours at a time listening to what Miss H. called a *talking head*, was not the best environment to create. Drawing on my previous experience in the classroom I theorized that perhaps instructors felt that anything termed *student interaction* had to be a long drawn out activity, much like the learning activities the curriculum already included. However, I knew first-

hand the value of shifting student focus, even for a short amount of time, to a different person in the room. I had found previously that this practice often help re-focus students to the point that they were able to pay attention again.

Thus I began to look for scholarship to help back up my personal experience. In my search I located the research of Young, Robinson, and Alberts (2009) on student attention span. Operating on the notion that student attention span wanes between 10 to 30 minutes into a task (Frederick, 1986; Horgan 2003; Stuart & Rutherford, 1978), authors Young, Robinson, and Alberts investigate strategies to help combat this decrease of attention span. The authors advocate that instructors can start that attention cycle over by incorporating *active learning strategies* into classroom presentations. These strategies were categorized in their findings as short breaks or novel activities, buzz groups, interactive session, mini-lectures, case studies or videos (pp. 52-53). Armed with these types of activities as a starting point, I returned to the original goals for this project.

Revised PPT Goals

My new goals for revising the curriculum PPTs were as follows:

1. Address the customer critiques that the old style was text heavy, not interesting, and not useful in the classroom.

2. Find a solution that discouraged instructors from *reading* off the PPT slides; in turn this would allow more instruction and less rote reading of information.

3. Allow instructors to use the product out of the box and use it even if technology was a bit intimidating or unfamiliar to them.

4. Incorporate the active learning strategies that would re-activate student attention spans common in training environments.

At this point it became apparent to me that I would have to continue to work within the constraints of PPT as the main method of delivering FPP's digital presentations. Coinciding with this decision was the fact that my office computer at work was upgraded to MS Office 2010. With this upgrade came some technological changes that helped me refine the PPT style I sought to bring to customer's classrooms.

New Style Details

The following section examines in detail the new style of PPT developed using my revised goals for this frame experiment. This style was developed first for the Hazardous Materials for First Responders, 4th edition curriculum and further refined in the Vehicle Extrication, 3rd edition curriculum. It is important to note that FPP manuals are developed at different levels based on projected sales (A is the highest, with more projected sales and C is lower, with less projected sales). All of the manuals produced meet a market demand, it is just that more specialized texts only serve specialized audiences, and thus often sell less copies the more restricted the audience is. The following examples allow the reader to explore the changes to the PPT style, in the order of my revised goals, and look at how each type of slide works to meet these specific goals. The example for each goal will display the new style side-by-side with the old style slide to further illustrate the changes. In this examination I will only look at the slides that were changed in the revision. Some slides (title slide, learning objective slides, warning/caution slides) did not change and thus I will omit them in the discussion below.

Goal 1: Improve Visual Appeal

The first goal of the revised PPT style was to address customer critiques that the present style was too text heavy and not visually interesting. To address this goal I decided to discontinue the use of large blocks of text on the slides altogether. In its place I substituted short phrases displayed in Smart Art.

Old Style (left) – Cuts phrases from the Lesson Outline to convey information; takes three slides to cover this information.

New Style (below) – Uses phrases in Smart Art to convey information, only takes one slide.
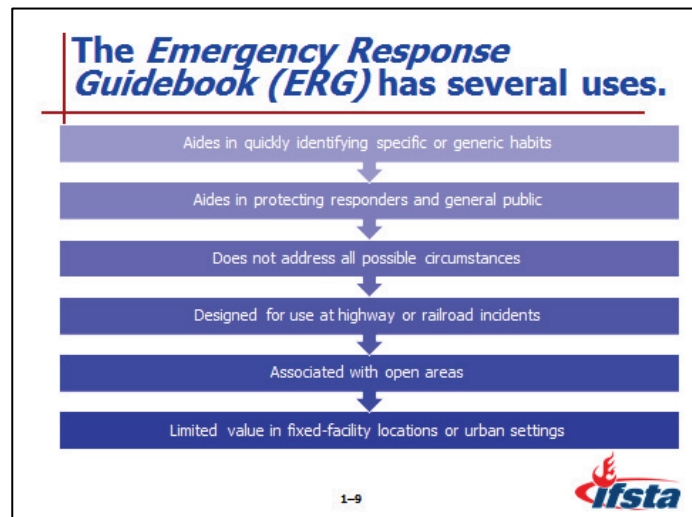
Figure 4.1 Difference in use of Text

Goal 2: Discourage Reading, Make Presentation More Useful

The second goal was to discourage instructors from the poor classroom practice of reading from the slides; using the Smart Art was one step in this direction. Another way to discourage this practice was to incorporate the use of more graphics in place of text on the slides. The FPP Graphics department provides excellent illustrations, graphics, and tables to accompany instructional materials in the manuals; I wanted the revised PPT style to incorporate these more intentionally. In doing so I was able to incorporate the desire of the students in Mackiewicz's study to see the use of relevant visuals. In addition I also wanted to address the student opinion that the main idea of the slide should be clearly stated. To do this I used a complete sentence as the slide header rather than a key phrase.
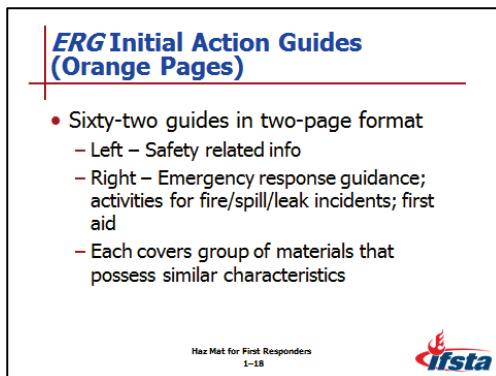
Old Style (left) – Uses title phrase and then text phrases from the Lesson Outline to convey information.
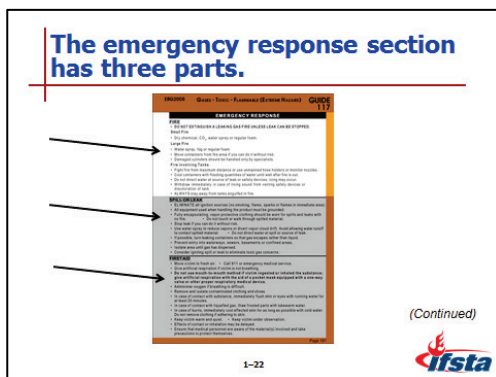
New Style (left) – Uses complete sentence and then image to convey information. Arrows appear and disappear as instructor discusses each section of the image.

Figure 4.2 Difference in use of Title Sentence

Goal 3: Make Technology User Friendly

The third goal was to find a way to make any changes to technology more user friendly for instructors that might not be as familiar with more recent changes to PPT. I addressed this in several ways. The first was to update the user guides FPP provides to customers for free with Curriculum materials. These guides are step-by-step "how to" documents that allow instructors to modify curriculum components to meet the needs of their local jurisdictions. To do this I located an unpaid intern to modify MS Office 2007 tutorials to reflect changes in MS Office 2010. Both sets of documents now come standard with FPP Curriculum packages. The second way I worked to make the changes in FPP's PPT style to be user friendly was by providing the follow **New Tools** section (shown below) as both part of the Lesson Outline and as a flyer in every curriculum package. The explanation of the revised pieces help instructors identify how to navigate through these objects during classroom instruction.

Figure 4.3 Instructor Information for New Style

Goal 4: Incorporate Active Learning Strategies

Another goal during this revision was to find ways to incorporate the active learning strategies that were suggested by Young, Robinson, and Alberts. I reviewed the strategies suggested by their research and tried to select options that would work within the constraints of the fire service training classroom. With that in mind, I made the following changes to FPP's treatment of the review questions developed for use in the manual. In addition to that change, I also added the use of videos and interactive flash objects to the PPT style.

    Review questions. The change in style from isolating review questions at the end of the PPT to interspersing them throughout the presentation works to incorporate the short breaks and buzz groups mentioned in the active learning strategies research. Allowing students to speak, even if just for a minute or two shifts the focus from the instructor in an attempt to reset the student attention cycle.
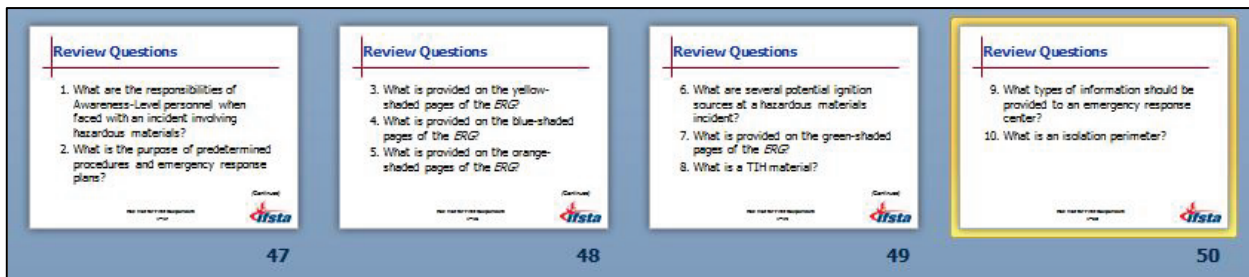
Old Style (above) – Review questions were listed at the end of the presentation one after another. Often instructors simply skip these questions.

New Style (left) – Review questions are interspersed throughout the presentation in order to incorporate more student interaction.

Figure 4.4 Difference in use of Review Questions

Videos and interactive flash objects. Incorporating videos and interactive flash objects into PPT presentations took a bit more planning to implement. The use of both of these objects is an attempt at incorporating the active learning strategy of novel activities. The danger with using something like this is that once these types of slides become normal, the novelty dies away and requires a change again. In order to combat this impact, I chose to only use videos that reinforce instructional content not included already in the Lesson Outline. In this way instructors are able to have a discussion with students that will enrich the application of information, but not contradict the manual text.
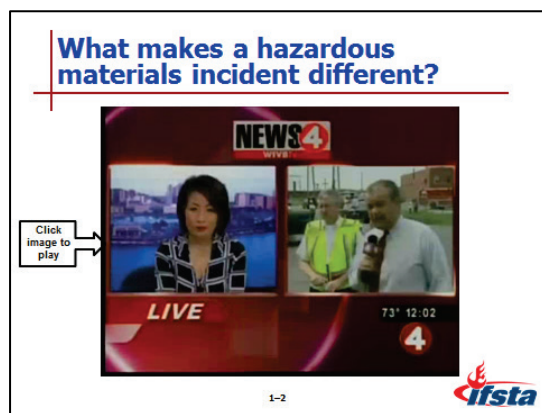
Old Style (none) – No video, may have used a Ask Student discussion question, but not in this example

New Style (left) – Video illustrates concept and is followed up by brief in-class discussion

Figure 4.5 Difference in use of Video

Incorporating the interactive flash objects took the cooperation of an artist from FPP's Graphics department. While I was developing this revised approach to PPT I asked my supervisor if it would be ok to contact an artist I thought would be interested in working with me on the project (Mr. B.). I was given permission and successfully found an ally in this artist. All of the examples seen here were developed in cooperation with Mr. B.

The concept of the interactive flash object is based on another approach to integrating novel technology into the classroom. In this case the flash object will either illustrate a concept or call out different aspects of a single image. All the objects are based on the already created

graphics (images, illustrations, and tables) from the manual text. The following examples explore some of the ways interactive objects can be used in PPT presentations.
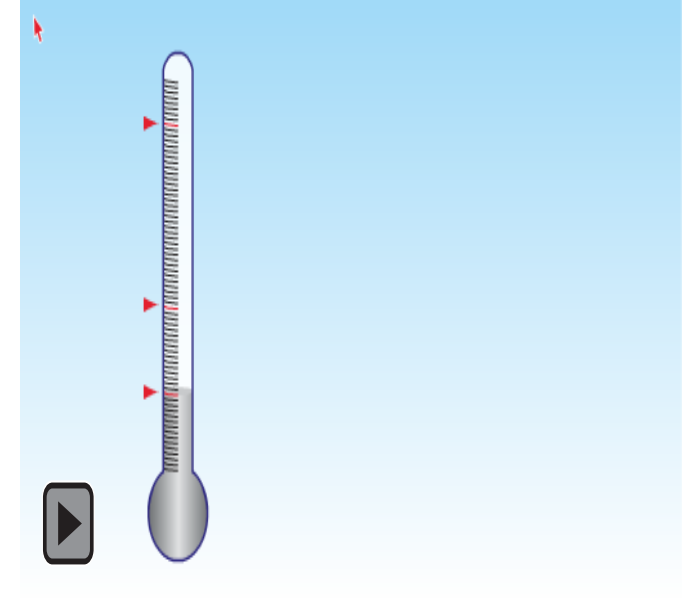
Interactive Flash Object 4.1

Illustrate a concept. This object illustrates the effects of an explosion.
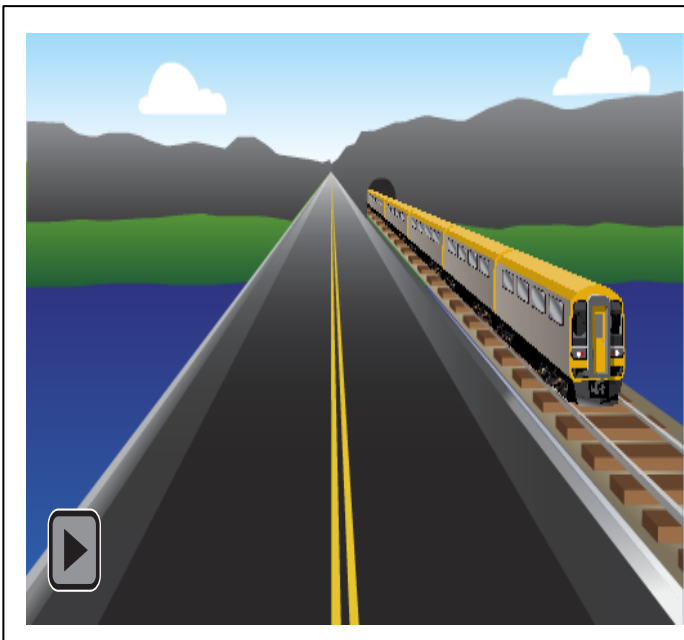
Interactive Flash Object 4.2

List information. This object lists specific information about hazardous materials incidents by focusing on the frequency of occurrences in various modes of transportation first, and then the instructor clicks through the top chemicals incidents occur with.

Interactive Flash Object 4.3

Define a term. This object defines the temperatures for liquid and solid phase materials

After establishing these revised strategies I was given the task of creating a similar presentation without the videos and flash objects for a C (less projected sales) manual. In this case I used the same strategies omitting the flash objects and videos. While I did feel that this was a loss instructionally, I understood that FPP could not afford to invest more hours into a book that was not projected to make as much money. Again, this was a shift in my thinking and I had to work to ensure that the other active learning strategies used in the PPTs for this manual allowed the student attention cycle to be reset at regular intervals even without the novel use of technology.

Results and Refining Usability

As the new PPT style was put into production, I was asked to preview the changes for both the Marketing and Customer Service divisions. To prepare for this I created a brief handout emphasizing the changes and suggesting possible troubleshooting tactics that FPP Customer

Service Representatives could use if customers called in asking for help. This was another move toward trying to make these changes cause as little amount of stress on the customer as possible.

During these previews I received further feedback on the way that the interactive objects and video clips actually functioned in the presentation. Because of this feedback Mr. B. and I revised the flash objects to incorporate a red arrow in the upper left corner (to signify it was an interactive object) and a red reset arrow in the lower right corner (to signify the end of the object's path). The reset arrow also allows instructors to quickly quiz students on the information presented on the slide, another way of incorporating interactive learning strategies.

The overall reception within the organization was one of interest and excitement. I was also asked to preview the new style to a special committee convened during the International Fire Service Training Association's Annual Conference, held yearly in July. The committee had been called to discuss changes that were needed for the newest edition of The Essentials of Firefighting, 6th edition (getting ready to start production at the time). One of the suggestions of the committee was to alter the PPT presentation style so I was pleased to be able to show the subject matter experts gathered that FPP had anticipated that need and was ready to meet it.

The final step in this frame experiment was to develop a new Curriculum Style Guide entry to reflect the new approach to developing PPT presentations. This was completed by an unpaid intern who gathered the style information from Curriculum staff (led cooperatively by me) and then formatted that to match the style guide under revision.

Teaching the Style to FPP Instructional Developers

Another aspect of refining my new approach to PPT presentations came during the period of time in which other FPP Curriculum Developers began to use the style guide to make their own presentations. Because of the validation process and the large nature of the manuals produced by

FPP this actually did not occur for several months after we had finished the style guide and finalized the standard work process for making the PPTs. These presentations are next to the last component created because we depend on the manual layout for both final content and graphics to use. So it was not until my colleague Miss H. was working on her own project that the new style guide was used by anyone but me.

For this project she was the lead instructional developer and our other co-workers, Mrs. F. and Mrs. N., acted as editor and proofreader on the PPTs for her project. It was during this project that my co-workers raised several concerns about the new style of PPT. Mrs. F. in particular said that the new style guide led her to believe that there was an emphasis on the image and that in her opinion the center of the presentation should be the content, not the pictures. It was difficult to hear critiques of a project I had put so much time into, however the more I considered their viewpoint, the more I was inclined to understand it. With that in mind I collaborated with Miss H. and our new supervisor Mr. C. (formerly a Senior Editor) to create a new style guide that helped establish the Lesson Outline content as the focal point of the PPT and not the graphics from the manual. It was this feedback from an internal user that helped continue the refinement of this style, much as student reflections helped confirm or deny the usefulness of earlier frame experiments.

Providing a Background

The first step I took when considering how to revise the style guide was to realize that I had expected my co-workers to put into practice a method that I had developed based on my years of using PPT, my interest in multimodal composing, and my experience with graphic design; something none of them had. Looking at how I could quantify something I did intuitively was a difficult task. I started with an attempt to bring into focus **why** these changes were needed. The

introduction section below was developed to briefly outline the research I had done on PPT

presentations, interactive learning strategies, and multimodal composing.

Digital Presentation Slides

Each lesson outline has a corresponding digital presentation. Each presentation is built with the following concepts in mind:

1) The instructor will use some form of the provided Lesson Outline to teach from.

2) Studies show students cannot process and retain two forms of linguistic input (such as hearing the instructor and reading a slide) at the same time.

3) Providing a graphic representation or key words in place of a slide that duplicates the text of the Lesson Outline provides both

a) a presentation more suited to the graphic-based learning today's student is more accustomed to and

b) the instructor the opportunity to tailor the information for the needs of their students and jurisdiction.

The slides should emphasize the key points of the outline, should not be text heavy, and should not restate the outline word for word.

Use the following steps in conjunction with the template and example provided on the wiki to create a digital presentation that presents the main ideas of the lesson outline in a graphically based format.

Figure 4.6 Establishing Strategies to Use in PowerPoint® Development

By outlining these basic assumptions I addressed my co-workers questions and attempted to shift

the focus from the fact that they were being asked to do something new onto the benefits of the

change. At the same time this documentation allowed us to provide the information to future FPP

Curriculum Developers not privy to our conversations.

Putting Content First

The next step in addressing my colleagues concerns was to find a way to provide a step-by-step

of the process I used to develop my PPTs that the first revision of the style guide did not. Mr. C.

suggested that this could best be accomplished by listing the steps I took in order, starting with

identifying the main content first. To reach this goal these steps were established:

Step 1: Identify the main concept in the Lesson Outline that needs to be presented.

Step 2: Write a complete sentence that communicates the main idea of the slide.

Step 3: Illustrate the main point of the slide using pictures, graphics, interactive objects, videos, or smart art.

By emphasizing locating the content first I tried to put the strength of this PPT style back into the information that instructors need to focus on in the classroom. There were further discussions about how to identify the main concepts and the best way to write the main idea sentence. These were interesting aspects of developing this style but in the end it was decided that these aspects were ones that each Instructional Developer would accomplish as best suited the manual they were working on. One of the interesting (and at time frustrating) parts of developing FPP Curriculum is that each project is unique because the standards are constantly revised to reflect industry best practices…therefore no project is ever the same twice. This requires an amount of flexibility in the style guide used in our division and this is one example of that flexibility.

Standardizing Graphics – Focusing on Smart Art

Another aspect of refining this new style was to provide rules for each type of supporting content. One move in this direction was to establish a general rule that developers should use one dominant piece of supporting information per slide; if this is not possible, use two of equal size. This rule is in line with many theories of graphic design about ways to achieve balance and use white space effectively. Because the PPT program does a lot of the standardizing of size for users, this general rule is sufficient to help meet the complex demand to not overcrowd a visual canvas.

To supplement this general rule I also provided guidelines for each type of support. These specifics work to give guidance to developers less familiar with the PPT program and help achieve consistency across curriculum being developed by several different employees. In the

next section I will focus on the rules for Smart Art. The reason for this is that this type of content support generated the most discussion during the style guide revision.

Smart Art is a function of most MS Office products that can allow users to quickly insert graphics to show spatial-visual relationships between ideas. This function of the PPT program is ideal for FPP curriculum because test users did not see Smart Art as text, but as graphics. This means that by using Smart Art instead of text, we are still able to include content and address the customer critique that the old style of PPT was too text heavy.

The first guideline for its use is that it should be used when other forms of content support are not available. While this may give the impression it is used infrequently, it is actually the most used type of content support in PPTs. Because of this it is essential that its use is consistent across all the curriculum packages produced. Therefore the following guidelines are used to ensure that consistency.

1) **Determine what relationship should be shown for the information in the lesson outline –** Select smart art that will express that relationship but do not imply a relationship that does not exist in the information. For example, do not use art with arrows between items in a list if they are not connected.

2) **Decide what key words or phrases will reinforce the slide title sentence –** The text in the smart art should be words or phrases, not complete sentences. This is another way to reinforce the key concepts that teach the learning objectives.

3) **Determine how those words or phrases fit into the relationship decided upon in step 1.**

4**) Decide how many slides will be needed to communicate the information –**

Consider if the concept needs a new main idea or if the idea should be continued (using

the *Cont.* label).

The first rule of use helps to ensure that students are not mislead about information or its

importance. One critique of the pilot versions of this style was that a novice instructor might

discuss topics in a way that was not appropriate because some of the images used implied a

relationship that did not exist between concepts. The second and third rules help developers

select a smart art shell that will visually display the content appropriately. By deciding on the

key words first, developers again put the content before the graphic; which was important to my

colleagues. The last step becomes the actual production of the slide and information for the PPT;

once it is finished the process begins all over again.

Promoting the New Style to FPP Customers

In-Person Presentations

During this time of training other instructional developers on how to execute FPP's new style of

PPT, I also had the opportunity to share with two groups of fire service instructors how these

changes could be implemented into their classrooms. I created and then co-presented a short 2

hour informational session on *Engaging and effective PowerPoint®*. Miss H. and I were invited

to share this presentation at the 2010 Fire Service Instructors of Oklahoma Conference and Mr.

C. and I were invited to share a revised version at the 2012 South Carolina Instructors

Conference.

As I designed this presentation, I considered the concepts and cultural attitudes I had

learned of in my fire service instructor I class. I also gathered information about what a *typical*

fire service instructor might know and understand about classroom instructional methods. After performing this needs analysis, I created a presentation that would:

1) Allow instructors to experience both the old and new style of PPT, including de-briefing sessions on which they preferred;

2) Clearly state the advice of both experts and students on what made an effective PPT, including small group discussions on how these rules might be incorporated into the fire service training classroom; and

3) Illustrate through discussion and example, how FPP's PPT style centered on three key components to create a content driven, visually engaging, and interactive instructional environment (see Appendix D for PPT presentation, instructor notes, and student handout).
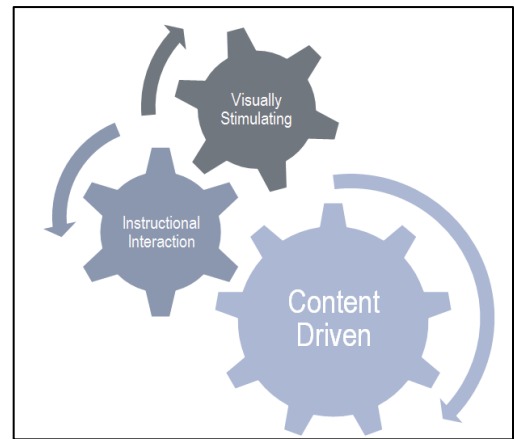
Figure 4.7 Instructional Design Principles
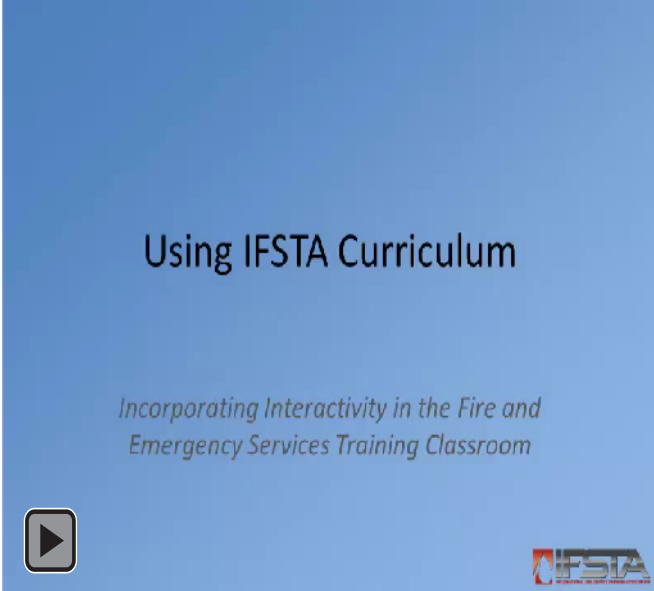
During these presentations I received positive feedback from the instructors present. Fire service training professionals were interested in the interactive learning techniques I shared and especially commented on the concept of the attention window. One instructor related that he had never considered that an attention break could just be a brief break; he always thought it had to be at least 20-30 minutes to have an impact. While this instructional strategy is not completely new, it is a new application in this specific environment and I was excited to have shared knowledge with other instructional professionals. This feedback was also useful much as student reflections were helpful in earlier frame experiments. It helped focus on what should be communicated in larger delivery methods, such as the IFSTA quarterly newsletter and tutorial videos to be created later in the process.

Speaking of Fire Article

The other method I used to share these changes with fire service instructors was an article I wrote for FPP's quarterly newsletter, *Speaking of Fire*. Because it is virtually impossible to personally contact all of FPP's customers and share the instructional improvements made to the curriculum, this article was an important communication tool. As I wrote this text, I considered how to distill a two hour presentation into 800-1,000 words. Again, considering the needs of my audience I endeavored to communicate how the changes to FPP Curriculum could be beneficial in the classroom and allow more student/instructor interaction. In this forum I tried to more explicitly state why this change was need. This was necessary because readers could not visually experience the two versions of PPT styles in person. Because FPP has such a strong customer base, during a change like this it is important to maintain communication with both loyal and new customers. While the article may be viewed by some as a marketing piece (see Appendix D for full article), it also served to establish this communication as well.

Instructor Tutorial Video

The final way that I am using to share this information with instructors is through a brief video presentation. This video is distributed on FPP's flashdrive curriculum and via streaming online through IFSTA's online learning management system, ResourceOne. The video briefly explains the instructional design principles that the new PPT style is based on. It also gives instructors specific tips on how to use the media embedded into the presentation. This video was drafted based on the information used to develop the new style and then piloted with a group of fire service instructors. From this feedback process the video was revised to include aspects important to the instructor regarding the changes made during this switch from textual to graphical based presentations (see Video 4.2 and caption on next page). In addition to this video,

| | *Video 4.2*

This video is distributed to help instructors used to the textually based style of presentations transition to the new graphically based style. A companion video for students is also distributed to help them make the transition as well.

TRANSCRIPT |

the feedback from a pilot audience led to the creation of a companion student video to help students understand the changes to the PPT and how they could still use it to learn effectively.

The entire experience of creating, piloting, establishing a style guide, and then finally promoting these changes to customers for this PPT style incorporated many methods of communication. Not only was a user needs analysis required while creating the new style, but also understanding the needs of the Instructional Developers to learn the style. In addition, disseminating the reasons and advantages of these changes to FPP customers was an important step in this seemingly small change in the entire curriculum package. Critics who argue that multimodal composing does not require the depth of understanding that alphabetic texts require, should reconsider this position. While not every multimodal text will depend on such an intense process for creation, implementation, and production, many texts will require some form of these activities (just like the alphabetic texts so often privileged in academic writing environments).

Composing a Multimodal Dissertation

Reflections on using multimodal composition for academic practice

~~Collaboration and Structure ~~

This entry discusses how the professional writing environment at Fire Protection Publications (FPP) helped to focus the organization and development of the narratives found in all three chapters of this project. My previous experiences in the first year and technical writing classrooms helped me to develop an understanding of what instructors need when planning for and teaching a course. Translating this and my research on visual communication methods into a new PowerPoint® (PPT) style for FPP (see chapter 4 for details) helped me to focus on what types of support would be best suited for use in the narratives used for the final project.

Conceptualizing the presentations as a component in a larger package helped me to see even more clearly how purpose guides mode and message. This is most clearly illustrated through the instructor and student videos we created to help guide FPP customers through these changes (see here for the instructor video). This video clearly states that the Lesson Outline is designed for the instructor and the PPT presentation for the student. By specifically identifying the target audience for each instructional component, I was able to articulate why the changes made to the presentation style are important for quality instructional methods (a goal for FPP customers). This directly influenced the production of my dissertation by forcing me to consider specifically each piece of media in the text. I do not simply include them to take up space and display my ability to produce these types of text. Each serves a specific rhetorical need in supporting the overarching message of my text.

Reflecting on this final narrative also brought forward the connection that teaching others about how to compose a multimodal text is a powerful tool for understanding the rhetorical strategies used in the final product. It was not until I had to consider ways to communicate how to create this new style to others

in the organization (see chapter 4 for details) that I was able to concretely state the specific steps in the development process. During the creation of this dissertation I have worked cooperatively with colleagues both in my academic and professional settings to learn the skills needed to produce the final text. By teaching others how to create and use the same tools I used to author this project, I was able to gain the skills needed to complete it.
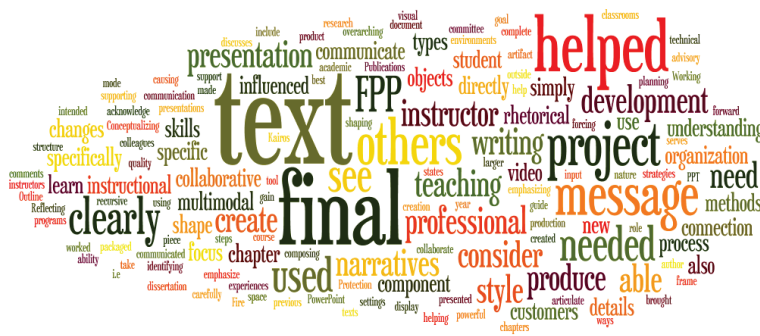
The final way the PSA frame experiment helped me is by emphasizing the need to structure a message more clearly. Not only did I collaborate with others to learn the programs needed to produce this multimodal text, but I also acknowledge the role of others in helping to shape the message communicated in this project. Working in professional writing environments (both FPP and *Kairos*) emphasize to me the collaborative nature of texts.

This concept has directly influenced my development of this dissertation by causing me to carefully consider each artifact presented in the narratives. The collaborative and recursive authoring process used (i.e. comments from outside readers and an advisory committee shaping the final text) for the project, helped shape the message by using that input to create a text focused on the objects needed to communicate my intended message instead of simply being a presentation of objects with no explication or connection.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Lessons from Exploring Multimodal Composing

As explored in each of the three previous chapters, the frame experiments investigate the ways that multimodal composition could work in different composing environments. Each showed specific lessons to be gained and examined the unexpected results that developed along the way as well. Operating from the viewpoint that this project is itself an additional frame experiment, this conclusion must incorporate active reflection and either confirm the strategies used here or suggest changes that could develop when further attempts to draw multimodal composition into both academic and training environments. The following section reflects on the broad themes that developed through all three of the larger narratives explicated before.

To begin, a summary/review of the specific lessons learned through each frame experiment is required. The music video assignment revealed the need to help students understand the connection between lyrics and images in music videos, how authorial intent can influence the analysis of a music video, and the unique relationship between claims and evidence that must be examined writing a rhetorical analysis of a music video. The webtext assignment showed the importance of finding a connection between a thesis and the visual used to communicate it, how the rhetorical situation can impact the design of a webtext, and how connections between technology and some aspects of process pedagogy can help students

understand ways to analyze print ads and communicate recommendations for improvement through a webtext. The technical communication assignment sequence focused attention on how a technologically informed development process can influence the development and structure of a multimodal text, the ways that scaffolding can be implemented as a part of an assignment sequence, and how student driven instruction can be used in a classroom focused on incorporating multimodal composing practices into assignments. The assessment and redesign of instructional PowerPoints® for fire service training highlighted the need to not only have a specific design strategy, but brought forward the intricate process of teaching that strategy to users with a variety of experience levels, for both designers and users of the end product.

As I work to draw all these narratives together in order to use the experiences explored here to "envision a possible future" (Lambert, 1995, p. 7) three overarching themes arise that can be applied to more general uses of multimodal composing theory and practices. These are:

1) The interrelated nature of analysis and production of multimodal texts,

2) The role that the WAY technology is approached can play in the final product, and

3) The how choice of a mode of communication should be driven by the message being delivered.

Lesson 1: Integration of Analysis and Production

To better understand each of these broad ideas, a closer examination of the activities that lead me to these concepts is needed. To begin, one must acknowledge the ways that analysis and production of multimodal texts are tightly integrated. Several scholars acknowledge and discuss the interrelated nature of these two processes. Kress (cited in Hocks 2003) asserts that critique (analysis) and design (production) are two knowledge-making processes. Hocks summarizes this relationship by noting the fact that "design moves us from rhetorical criticism to invention and

production" (p. 644). Stroup (2000) also notes that it is important for users to be aware of the ways that authors can control the reader's experience through visual layout and graphic display. He notes that a user's ability to critically understand the implications of multimodal texts "depends on the availability of a theoretical language and a critical tradition for describing these effects and a pedagogical apparatus for teaching them" (p. 626). The results of my own experience reinforce the opinions of these scholars in the ways explained below.

The music video assignment allowed students to begin to use analysis to understand the production of a multimodal text. This was evident in the classroom conversations that focused on why the author of the song and the producer of the music video may have had different reasons for selecting the images and actions to support the lyrics of the song. However, this assignment fell short in teaching students just how the constraints of a specific mode or form, could drive some of these decisions. The students that created the webtext and PSA portfolio, in subsequent frame experiments, were able to articulate more clearly why they made the choices they did in selecting text, graphics, and information than the music video group. I feel this was due to my use of a technologically informed process theory approach and the multiple planning documents to guide students through the development for a multimodal project. While this method was applied in part in the music video analysis, the final text was still not engaging in a way that was unique enough for the goals of that frame experiment.

Using this technologically focused process approach is one way instructors seeking to use multimodal composing practices in the classroom can help students develop the theoretical language advocated for by Stroup (2000). The assignment sheets presented in Appendices A-B-C show that breaking the larger assignment into smaller, reflective sections allows students to learn

in a more manageable manner the intricate layers of meaning and intent presented in a

multimodal text (in addition to those present in an alphabetic one).

This deliberate guidance and building from one skill-level to the next was also present in

the instructional design situation for Fire Protection Publications (FPP) in several ways. First

customer feedback generated the reason the redesign of the presentations was needed. In

addition, end-user ability also played a role in restricting the design of the PowerPoint ® (PPT)

improvements as well. In other words, the redesigned presentations had to address customer

concerns, but could not be too difficult to use for instructors that may not have much

technological experience. In this case, analysis and production were inextricably linked in the

development of teaching this style to other internal employees as well. Because this group also

has varying experience levels technologically, I had to analyze the composing situation as well

as in end use of the multimodal text (in this case the PPT presentation). All of these factors

guided (and at times dictated) the decisions I could make as a designer and producer of these

multimodal texts.

The lesson others could take from these frame experiments is the need for the scaffolding

structure used throughout these narratives. In the classroom, assignments need to be broken apart

in a way that offers practice, low-risk performance opportunities with feedback, and a review of

skills along the way to a final assignment. In the case of a professional writing environment, user

support (both for designers and end-users) must be provided to help the transition from one style

to another. This skills based approach acknowledges that while readers are immersed in a

technological world daily – creating these objects is not an innately learned skill. Just as

composing alphabetically must incorporate instruction, practice, and feedback, so should

multimodal composing. While some may argue that these skills can be just as easily taught using

solely alphabetic texts, I would reiterate that alphabetic composing is a part of multimodal composition. By allowing students to choose the best mode for a message, instructors can offer a wider range of skills in composing classes; skills that are relevant to a variety of composing situations, not just those of a classroom.

Lesson 2: Approaching Technology

The next theme that appeared in all of these composing situations was that the way an instructor or user approaches the use of technology can also impact the final text. That is to say, if technology is used for its own sake with no regard to using it purposefully, then the end result usually is not as positive as it could be. I will admit on some level I began using media in my classroom because I wanted to find ways to interest students in my class a bit more. However, the more I delved into this topic, the more I realized that using technology because it is new, flashy, and shiny can actually be detrimental to the final result and detract from other instruction along the way.

This was demonstrated most clearly by the music video assignment, which became my jumping off point for the use of media in the classroom. Because I incorporated the use of media for its own sake in this assignment, I am not sure if students gained any new or different knowledge than if we had simply analyzed an alphabetic text. I learned from this and when designing later assignments I endeavored to only incorporate multimodal texts and the technology needed to produce them when needed. Takayoshi (1996) alludes to this type of approach in her acknowledgement that visual rhetoric is not a result of the use of computers and technology in composing practices; rather it is "an element over which students can gain more control and understanding" (p. 250-251). Because the use of the technology is not, for me, the

goal of multimodal composing, selecting the most appropriate technology becomes a part of the composing process…not the driving force for the final text.

The webtext and PSA portfolio assignments both reflect this in the overall design of the assignment and sequence of the process for creating a final text. Both of these composing situations require students to incorporate analysis and production in different ways (also building on the first theme discussed previously). In the webtext assignment the analysis portion of the text was not connected to the production of the final text. I felt like students were still lacking in understanding how to apply their analytical skills that they applied to the Dove and CK ad campaigns to their own advertising company websites.

This lack of understanding is why in the PSA portfolio sequence I worked to have students use analysis not only in identifying the problem for the PSA, but also of the PSA genre itself and the design aspects of a web portfolio. By incorporating the multimodal text as a purposeful aspect of the assignment, I felt that students were better able to articulate why they made the design decisions they did. By helping students to understand **why** the design worked that way, I believe they will be able to draw on this skill set in situations outside of the classroom. As a matter of fact, several students emailed me after that class was done to tell me just that and to share stories of how they applied the skills learned in the class during other composing situations. By requiring students to decide on technology for a reason, not just because it was there, they gained a better mastery of design and composing skills than the situations in which I dictated what technology was required by the assignment.

This theme is also prevalent in the PPT design narrative. The use of technology is dictated by the instructional practices (and governing standards) of the fire service. The National Fire Protection Association standards are used to standardize and regulate fire service training

classrooms across the nation requires specific aspects of the presentation to be the same. Also influencing the design of instructional presentations were the expectations and abilities of end users. Using a new technology, like Prezi, seemed like a good idea, however it proved in the end to not be a workable solution. By examining the situation and seeking the **best** technological solution, not just the newest, flashiest one, the end result was better for all parties involved.

The lesson other practitioners endeavoring to incorporate multimodal composition into activities could take from this is to spend the time needed to discover what the *best* technology for a message is. The additional background and foundation this offers for the final text is worth the time. Williams (2001, II) notes that offering students the opportunity to compose in a digital environment allows them to "realize that they command both the new forms of literacy that technology enables as well as the old forms of literacy that technology makes more accessible" (p. 132). Williams believes the goal of composition courses is "to help students acquire the skills to live a critically engaged life—that is, to identify problems, to solve them, and to communicate with others about them" (2001 I, p. 25). Allowing students to incorporate the choice of technology into this problem-solving model is a valuable aspect of using multimodal composing.

One example can be found in the PSA assignment experience. One group of students chose to create an audio sequence for their PSA campaign focused on a national animal tracking system. During classroom discussions the group stated this was because their primary audience – farmers and livestock owners – frequently used the radio as a source of information. Incorporating the rhetorical understanding of a target audience (through audience analysis or the en/decoding theories posited by Hall (1996)) allows multimodal composers to more adeptly communicate their intended message. Scholars may assert that incorporating multimodal composing opportunities in the classroom may be detrimental to student's learning about the

composing process at all. However, the experiences collected here have shown me that students have the ability to learn about and exercise critical decision making skills regarding the use of technology in a purposeful manner. If the goal of a composition classroom is to enable students to have the skills to participate in society, then it is crucial to teach them how to make meaning with visuals, as much as they must understand how to make meaning with verbal texts.

Lesson 3: Relationship of Mode and Message

The final theme present in all of the episodes explored here is the intertwined nature of mode and message. The music video assignment was the least successful attempt to use media in the classroom of all the episodes explored here. Upon reflection (in conjunction with these other assignments and composing situations), it could be argued that the restriction of mode to an alphabetic text for the final product played a role in this lack of success (but the experiment was inconclusive).

In an effort to learn from this first attempt, in the webtext and PSA portfolio assignments I worked to incorporate analysis and production of media into the assignment sequences more deliberately. In these cases it became more evident that when students considered the message of their text when selecting what mode to deliver it through, they displayed more awareness of not only their own role in encoding the message, but also the role that readers and users play in decoding messages communicated multimodally. The work of Williams (2001, I) is again relevant in this area. He states that literacy in the 21st century:

> Means possessing the skills necessary to effectively construct and comfortably navigate multiplicity, to manipulate and critique information, representations, knowledge, and arguments in multiple media from a wide range of sources, and to use multiple expressive technologies including those offered by print, visual, and digital tools. (p. 22)

Allowing students to explore and examine the relationship between mode and message is one way to encourage this type of literacy.

The strongest examples of the interrelated relationship between mode and message are found in the PSA portfolio and the FPP instructional presentations. The PSA portfolio allowed students to consider what distribution method would be most useful to their audience. For this reason some groups chose radio ads, others chose to create poster/flyer/pamphlet series, and yet others chose videos to communicate their message. As students worked through the process of developing the argument for their PSA they displayed awareness of ways that users access information in peer review and usability testing sessions and feedback memos. The FPP instructional presentation design also required an awareness of how the end user would implement any changes to the presentations. This required consideration of ways the fire service instructional situation can present several unique issues and work to address these in conjunction with the wide variety of technology and technological ability present in training environments. This multimodal composing situation also required the ability to articulate the design principles used for the presentation for an audience of instructional developers that have varying levels of technological competence as well. Considering the rhetorical situation of the message ultimately helped guide the mode chosen for conveying the message.

This consideration of the rhetorical situation, a basic tenet of composition and professional writing courses, helps to reinforce the work of scholars who acknowledge the connections between mode and message. Heba contends that new technologies build on both the content and "literacies required to read and interpret the earlier technologies" (qtd in Stroup, 2000). Additionally Hocks (2003) states that visual rhetoric, or visual strategies used for

meaning and persuasion, is hardly new. The need to begin with a foundation of basic rhetorical understanding of a text, no matter what its mode, is key to using multimodal composing.

Others developing approaches for multimodal composing situations should seek to first teach this relationship, as shown in the genre analysis aspects of the PSA campaign and style guide development portion of the FPP narrative. The next step is to help author/creators to select a method of communication – alphabetic, multimodal, or any combination thereof – that fits the message of the final text. Appendices A-B-C-D present several examples of methods that can be used to achieve this balance. Instructors that only teach textual-based composing practices cannot help students make the connections required by the types of texts students encounter in today's society. Without the use of multimodal composing practices in the classroom, students will be limited in their ability to participate effectively in many communication situations.

Unexpected Results

While it was not my conscious intent at the outset to create a project based on resistance, it has become apparent in the reflective process required to develop this final text that resistance is an element that can be traced throughout these narratives.[26] This began with my desire to use my classroom as an agent of change and interest in the music video assignment. Moving into the webtext and PSA campaign assignments, I worked to more effectively allow students to use the skills gained in our classes in larger applications (in other words, be able to apply the lessons to other assignments as well). To reach both of these goals I took the assigned sequence and shaped it into the frame experiments described in detail in previous chapters. Founded on the notion that "multimedia is, first and foremost, interdisciplinary" (Savage and Vogel, 2009, p. 4) I hoped to help teach students the best practices articulated by a variety of multimodal scholars (Blair,

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[26] I would like to note that what is seen as resistance in some institutions may be commonplace in others.

2004; DeLaGrange, 2001; Doering, Beach, O'Brien, 2007; George, 2002; Journet, Ball, Trauman, 2012; Selfe, C., Dewitt, Ball, Trauman, 2001; Selfe, 2007; Takayoshi, 1996; Wysocki, 2001). Honesty compels me to acknowledge that this process of teaching these practices was balanced with my own interest in these skills and abilities. Multimodal scholars often struggle to be "oppositional while gaining disciplinary order" (Williams, 2003, pp. 12-13). The narratives drawn together here help to illustrate that struggle in my own experience.

In addition to the longer narrative chapters explored here, I also want to include in my reflection the composing process used to create the dissertation itself. This interactive PDF ultimately highlights the way that mode and message are tied to one another. As the meta-narrative blog posts explained throughout this document, the process of choosing the final mode directly influenced the types of support and information included in each narrative. It would be an arduous task to document all of the decisions made, unmade, revised, and ultimately discarded in the development of this text. Several of the larger themes are explored in the blog posts throughout the document and I will not include the same information here that can be found in these. The final reflection I offer up is on the resistive nature of this document itself.

As I began to research and create a concept for what I wanted to write about, various constraints and expectations about what a dissertation should contain and could include worked to shape the final product. My classroom practices and coursework as a PhD student included investigating ways to incorporate multimodal composing in a scholarly way; this final text was no different. I had to journey through all the other composing situations described in previous chapters (both as an instructor and a student) before I could reach the level of ability to produce the document before you. In other words, without the analysis of each of these narratives I may

not have developed the idea for this mode of communicating the information this project contains.

In addition to the novel direction attempting a project like this allowed me to explore, the issue of creating a text that could operate in a scholarly space as in-depth enough to meet the scholastic expectations, while at the same time being multimodal, was a secondary challenge. An exciting and unexpected product of this narrative study is the resistance that the interactive PDF offers scholars operating in compositional situations that are not adequately prepared for a digitally-borne[27] text. As I explored in my blog entries, the process of choosing a multimodal dissertation was not easy. In the end I believe this mode can offer an alternative to scholars attempting to operate in a middle ground between alphabetic textual restrictions and digitally-borne modes of research. By incorporating the best practices of both verbal and visual rhetoric, this project is one possible way to reach both the technologically progressive and conservative.[28]

Lessons from Using Narrative Research Methods

In order to appropriately consider this dissertation as an additional narrative, reflection on what the use of narrative as a research method has contributed to the project is also required. The following section reflects on the broad themes that developed through the use of narrative as a research method in this project. This project can reveal several lessons when considering the work done in here in connection with the foundation of previous uses of both pedagogical narratives and the use of narrative inquiry. These are:

1) How incorporating multimodal composing tasks can create a technology gateway in that environment,

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[27] A text that is multimodal and must be read in a digital space
[28] With the caveat that a middle ground is not always desirable, the mode should fit the message as is explained throughout this text.

2) Ways that temporal, societal, and contextual composing situations can be used to

develop guiding principles for future tasks, and

3) Why active reflection is an important aspect of participant research.

Lesson 1: Opening Technology Gateways through Multimodal Composition

The first lesson that the use of narrative research methods highlights in this project is tied to use

of pedagogical narratives and how this type of scholarship can allow the examination of the

economics of technological literacy. Selfe and Hawisher's concept of the technology gateway

was not something I initially sought to develop in the composing situations examined here.

However, as I began to develop these narratives, a pattern became obvious. Each of the

composing tasks examined here (including the overall creation of this final text) required authors

to seek out a techno-literacy sponsor in some way.

In the classrooms I taught in, I initially filled this role as students would seek me out for

help on how to use the technology required by each task. Even in the music video assignment,

students were worried they *weren't getting* the assignment right and they sought out advice on

how to complete the task. However in later experiences, with the webtext and PSA sequence

especially, students not only relied on my own technological knowledge. They also sought out

the help and expertise of other classmates. The benefit of creating a situation in which students

can become an authority or expert became obvious when student interest in these classes

increased. I noted an increase in daily attendance and more active participation in the webtext

unit, however as I did not maintain these records formally I am not able to conclusively state

putting students in this role has a direct relationship on engagement in the classroom.

In the case of creating a new PPT style for FPP, the technology gateway was offered to

both internal instructional developers and the end users, FPP Customers. For internal staff,

learning how to use a pre-existing tool in a new way helped create more interest in developing that component for manuals. It also helped increase communication with other departments as the style requires more input from the Editorial and Graphics staff. Again, as I did not formally collect information on this aspect of the development process I can only point anecdotally to the increase in communication, but it is very obvious in day-to-day communications when comparing those at this present time with those of just a few years ago.

The reception of the new style and new user documentation is still in process as its inclusion in the flagship manual release recently will bring it into the hands of more customers than previous trail releases did. This is something that is being monitored to help adjust to user requests as the style is used and critiqued. Thus far however, the reception is positive and the sales and promotional presentations made regarding the changes have received favorable feedback. It is of note that opening the conversation regarding the use of and improvement of technology in the classroom has allowed FPP to also incorporate better classroom interaction and hopefully increase student participation. Noting the way that this technology gateway functions to possibly influence the way Fire and Emergency Services training courses are taught was an unexpected result of this project as well.

In all of the narratives examined here, it is exciting to consider how a shift in the way that multimodal composing tasks are approached can bring students, users, and author/creators into contact with technology in ways that work to empower knowledge creation and communication in unexpected ways.

Lesson 2: The Benefits of Considering the Temporal, Societal, and Contextual

The next lesson learned from the use of narrative as a research method is also tied back to the foundation of narrative inquiry. Considering the three aspects of narrative inquiry incorporated

by Connelly & Clandinin help to highlight how narrative research methods were beneficial to this project and my work as a participant/researcher. The temporal, societal, and contextual nature of the narratives examined here help to point out benefits of this type of research method for others seeking to situate their own composing experiences in a framework that can help create knowledge for future practices in these areas.

The first aspect of this project was its temporal nature. Because the past, present, and future of my own classroom and composing practices are relevant to the knowledge created in this project, narrative is beneficial to allowing active reflection. Because of this method, I was able to reflect on how the previous composing situations are informed by my present views on multimodal composing. By seeking to learn from the past and present composing experiences, I am able to develop understanding (and the lessons listed above) to help inform future practices, both for myself and others.

The second aspect of this project is the societal aspects that it works to address. Interaction of several types is present in this project. The first is that the premise developed out of noting how changes in society, particularly in the area of technology, may begin to impact students, both as author/creators and as reader/users. There are several environmental factors that created the foundation for this project: changes in technology, the rising interest in multimodal composing, and my desire to remain an active, relevant part of instructional methods as these changes occur. The use of narrative allows me to reflectively examine my own experiences by telling that story to others. Through this process I have learned more than if I had simply mulled these experiences over informally. In the end, telling my story here encourages me to keep seeking ways to change and keep up with both instructional and technological changes.

The third aspect of this project is the contextual nature of these situations. Each of these composing situations exists in a specific time and place. However, through the use of reflection and narrative, I am able to develop general guidelines that can be used by others seeking to find the same information (how can multimodal composing be put into practice) in the hope that they will continue to build and develop guidelines I can learn from as well. Meeting the goal of contributing to the ability of others to learn from and grow as an instructor is a large part of being a participant/researcher and narrative allows me to work toward that end.

Lesson 3: Active Reflection and Future Practice

The final lesson learned from the use of narrative as a research method ties directly to the rich possibility that use of narrative offers academic discourse as suggested by Spiegleman. Because the instructional process, whether in the classroom or in a professional environment, is often fluid and ever-changing it is important to stay aware of the shifting needs of that unique environment. Using narrative to explore the distinctly separate environments and the composing tasks of each allowed me to see that active reflection is an important aspect of this process.

Narrative as a research method enables scholars in the field of Composition/Rhetoric (and in other composing disciplines as well) to examine critically the best way to allow students to engage in the pursuit of critical engagement with ideas, concepts, and composing tasks. As demonstrated by the use of the frame experiment framework in narratives explored here, instructors need to take an active role in their classrooms and composing situations. One benefit of staying actively aware of changing composing practices is to see an increase is student interest in the classroom.

Composing practices have changed drastically with the advent of Web 2.0 (bordering on 3.0?) and instructors should be aware of these, attempt to stay current, and work to teach students

useful skills in order to allow them to be critically aware, active participants in whatever future is offered to them. The process of theorizing, creating, and completing this project (both the individual instructional situations and creating this document) has emphasized the importance of including multimodal composing practices into classrooms. This work behind this project also demonstrates that narrative can allow instructors to use reflective practice to inform experiences in a variety of composing environments. The more widespread use of narrative could allow knowledge making in a variety of fields that rely on interaction and observation as variables. In particular the creation of multimodal narratives like the one presented here, could allow the more widespread transfer of knowledge across disciplinary lines previously thought to be exclusive (however that is a claim that requires further research and documentation).

Further Projects and Research

Other projects that are a part of my daily composing tasks continue to require me to apply the lessons explored here. For example, FPP is beginning to offer online and hybrid instructional models for the fire service. The dominate method of training delivery currently used is face-to-face (in-person). The multitude of instructional choices presented when transitioning from face-to-face to online instruction could overwhelm our target instructors, all of whom have varying technological experience. I am able to help instructors though, because of the lessons learned from these narratives.

For example, FPP is committed to providing train-the-trainer courses (under development now) that will help with these changes. Based on the scaffolding approach explored here these will be offered in a tiered sequence. The first basic level class will guide users through the *how-to* of using the learning management system (LMS) technology (i.e. how to use a discussion board, how to look at student grades, how to post a document, etc.). This course is provided

based on the importance of scaffolding both technology use and low-stakes practice with feedback. We meet this need by allowing instructors to learn how to use the system before they are presented with a online classroom full of students.

The second advanced level class will guide users through the *what-if* of choosing instructional content and methods. For example, this class will explore the benefits of a discussion board (a concept not familiar in technical training), ways it can be implemented in the classroom, and other instructional decisions that must be made when creating an online course. This is also another way to scaffold new knowledge both of instructional methods and use of technology before the instructor is expected to have some level of expertise with the online learning environment.

Both of these courses are offered in the actual LMS that instructors will use, giving them a low-stakes opportunity to practice using the technology before guiding students through it. Providing this scaffolding on both the technological and instructional level is just one way the lesson learned from the narratives explored here help bolster my daily work at providing training and instructional materials to the fire service. This and other opportunities to apply, develop, and continue to learn how multimodal communication influences technical training and other teaching environments will continue to be my scholarly and professional focus.

Final Reflections

Composing in a variety of modes requires learning how to situate a message within the context of a specific rhetorical situation, while at the same time considering how those outside of that context might receive it as well. In our present multimodal culture, the rhetorical situation must also include consideration of mode in order to be most effective. The recursive relationship

between mode and message are just the tip of the concerns present when composing multimodally.

The narratives explored here are just a limited view of what opening composing situations up to include multimodal texts can allow in both academic and technical environments. There are many other situations that require readers and users to explore the interrelated nature of analysis and production, the role of purposefully implementing technology in composing situations, and the connections between message and mode. For this multimodal scholar this is an exciting challenge, to look for other methods to incorporate multimodal composition and its principles into daily practice…always looking for new applications of existing and new technologies. For me Markel's "ever-receding horizon" (1998, p. 383) is not a fatalistic pronouncement of the futile nature of working in multimodal composing, but an exciting challenge to continue the work begun here.

Composing a Multimodal Dissertation

Reflections on using multimodal composition for academic practice
~~The Challenge of Future Practice ~~

As the process of creating this multimodal dissertation project draws to a close, there are several observations that stand out to me as I reflect on what composing this type of a text (instead of a solely alphabetic one) has reinforced for me.

The first observation ties directly to all three frame experiments. It is that message and mode influence one another in a way that was not clear to me before. If I had chosen another mode of delivery (or had been forced to select another) I do not believe my message would be the same. Part of what helped draw out the inextricable relationship between message and mode was the process of creating the narratives presented here.

Exploring the various ways I could express, explain, and explore the beginning of my journey with multimodal composition is what taught me how to see these connections. Until one begins to compose multimodally and consider the various meanings a *simple* image can create, it is difficult to understand that relationship. It is not my stance that these cannot be learned through creation of alphabetic text. Rather, I advocate that we can actually strengthen these lessons by opening up the option of multimodal composition and guiding students through the decision making process. By requiring more than one mode of text, we require more thoughtful and considered authorship – no matter what mode it is through.

This leads me to my second observation, which is that students need the opportunity to learn about and compose in multiple modes. Participating in a graduate program and working full time is a rigorous undertaking and at times was almost overwhelming. However, my life circumstances demanded this commitment. I believe that my full time employment and subsequent promotion would not have been possible if I had not been able to display the ability to transfer my academic knowledge into a practical environment. It is not available (nor is it the goal) of every student to remain in academic pursuits. Being in a program that allowed me to explore both theoretical and practical applications for multimodal composition offered the opportunity to learn the skills that helped initially secure a position for me at Fire Protection Publications. The unwritten extension of this fact is that if we cut off students from learning how to compose multimodally, we may be cutting them off from future success in their chosen paths (no matter what their end goal).

My final observation is that I still have so much to learn, practice, and share with others about multimodal composing. The creation of this PDF document required authoring in several software platforms and programs (MS Word, MS PowerPoint®, Prezi, Camtasia, Audacity, and Wordle to name a few) and the use of multiple forms of input (physical and digital books, articles, and sources of information) just to create a summary of my instructional, compositional, and theoretical experiences with multimodal composing. While I reflect on how much I have learned, I also look forward to the future and consider how much I still want to learn, experiment with, and develop. It is exciting to me that as long as technologies keep changing and developing, there will always be something to learn from and apply in different situations.

I look forward to the challenge presented in Markel's "ever-receding horizon" (1998, p. 383) comment. This is not a fatalistic pronouncement of the futile nature of working in multimodal composing, but an exciting challenge to continue the work I have begun here.

BLOG ARCHIVE

#1 – Metanarrative
#2 – Scholarly Anxiety
#3 – Message and Design
#4 – Collaboration
#5 – Future Practice

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A

MUSIC VIDEO SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Elkie Burnside

Dr. Ron Brooks

ENGL 5213

30 August 2007

Single Text Analysis: Visual

Pink Floyd's video "Another Brick in the Wall" sends a message to those who feel repressed by authority, specifically those who are within the educational system. The main message the band communicates through the lyrics and images in the video is a warning. By using ethos and pathos the band communicates this message effectively to a specific audience. This target group extends from casual Pink Floyd listeners to anyone who prizes independent thinking. The song sends an urgent message about being aware of the truth behind what is happening in your own education. By using actual students, the band strengthens this warning and turns the song into a legendary message that is still listened to in the present century.

The first image a viewer sees in the video is of a young boy watching a train pass by in the dark. The occupants of the train reach out to the boy, their faces covered with a mask. The mask rubs away any individuality and makes everyone appear the same. These images are accompanied only by music. The boy hears a headmaster from his school yelling at him and eventually sees an older stuffy man shaking a stick at him. This image of the teacher shaking a cane at the boy immediately puts the viewer on the defensive. No one appreciates being yelled at or threatened. The band continues to draw the viewer into the little boy's world by showing him being shamed in front of his classmates. As the lyrics of the song begin, the listener is reminded that not every teacher wants to help. The first verse states: "Well, when we grew up and went to school,/There were certain teachers,/Who would hurt the children in any way they could" (Another Brick).

Example Paper Given to Students

The band uses the combination of these lyrics and the images of the boy being made fun of by his teacher to strengthen the argument that education is not always positive. This visual appeal to pathos is effective because it draws the viewer closer to the young boy. The story line and the lyrics continue to develop the emotional qualities of the video. Toward the end of the song, the image of students being put through an industrial assembly line evokes fear in the viewer. Because these students end up marching into a meat grinder, the message Pink Floyd sends is a very emotional one. These emotional images especially reach a particular part of the audience, the section who fears the process and consequences of repression.

The band also uses the ethos of actual students to communicate their message. This strengthens the song's appeal in several ways. Using actual students to both sing and participate in the video helps the band gain credibility. If actual students don't understand the importance of being aware of the influences around you, who does? The images of the masses of students rebelling against the headmaster also attempt to build the video's message. It is especially powerful to see the students pushing the headmaster back into a burning building while singing the chorus: "We don't need no education/We don't need no thought control/No dark sarcasm in the classroom/Teachers, leave them kids alone" (Another Brick). While this can be interpreted as pathos, the appeal to ethos is also present, because these students gain credibility from the earlier scenes of repression. The fact that Pink Floyd uses actual students is very deliberate. Oddly enough, the teachers of these 23 local tots did not appreciate that their students were singing an anti-school song for free. To placate the school, the band gave it 1000£ and a platinum record (Song Facts).

Pink Floyd is effective in communicating the message of awareness and anticipating the desire of their audience to throw off repression. Building credibility through ethos and an attempt

at pathos, the group creates a song full of interesting ideas. The universal appeal of the song has not faded over the years. Because there will always be an audience who fears repression, desires independent expression, and is willing to do any to gain that freedom Pink Floyd can guarantee their message will be distributed for many years to come. By playing on emotions and using realistic type settings the video version helps to promote the central message of rebelling against walls that can be created by repressive, authoritarian educational systems.

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Visual Rhetorical Analysis

Directions: Answer the following questions based on your partner's rough draft.

Argumentative Thesis Statement:

Is there a claim (argumentative thesis statement) that clearly analyzes how the argument of the chosen text is made? How does the claim respond to the text? (It should NOT respond to the text, it should state how the text expresses the main idea of the artist.) Underline the thesis within the rhetorical analysis. The thesis should be located within the first paragraph of the essay. If not, make a note to the writer.

What rhetorical component/appeal(s) is(are) the focus of the claim? Is the claim too broad? If so, suggest ways to narrow the focus.

Claims (supporting the thesis):

- What points (claims) support the thesis?
- Number each of the writer's claims of support on the draft.
- Does the writer make enough claims to support his/her thesis?
- Suggest revisions. (For example, if the writer claims that the artist's intent is to create ethos but the essay never gives evidence of emotional appeal, suggest places to support that aspect of the thesis.)
- Explain below how each claim reflects the thesis.

Illustrating the Points (evidence):

Locate and mark each method of support (evidence) for each point within the writer's draft. If evidence is lacking, then mark within the draft where evidence is needed.

Locate and mark with brackets [ ] where the author uses specific images from the video. If there are no images referenced, suggest places where images could be used as support.

Locate and mark with asterisks *quotation of lyrics* where the author uses quotation(s) of the lyrics. If there are no lyrics referenced, suggest places where lyrics could be used as support.

Do you, as the editor, accept the points made with the various method/method(s) of support? Is the analysis believable and supported? Why or why not? If not, suggest how the writer can improve his/her points, or the method/method(s) by which he/she supports his/her point.

Does the writer only summarize? If so mark the places where he/she only summarizes. Make suggestions to the writer to help him/her move to analysis instead of just summarizing.

Format and Citations:

Do the writer's paragraph breaks meet the audience's needs? How? Where would you suggest a paragraph break? Where would you suggest the writer not break a paragraph? Explain your reasoning for your decision.

Refer to the assignment sheet. Does the writer use the appropriate format? If not, suggest revisions.

When the writer uses the author's ideas, does he/she give appropriate attribution to the author? If not, note where citations are missing.

Essay #2 Grading Rubric

Text Approval (15 points)   _____/15

Rough Draft and Peer Critiques (35 points)   _____/5 [your response to another paper]
                                                                    _____/30 [your RD]
Final Draft (100 points)   _____/50 clear rhetorical analysis
                                                                    _____/20 clear organization
                                                                    _____/10 effective transitions
                                                                    _____/10 format [grammar, punctuation, etc.]
                                                                    _____/10 correct MLA Works Cited page

APPENDIX B

WEBTEXT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Rubric

Criteria	Pt	Pt	Comments
DOCUMENTS			
Meeting 1 Form	5		
Meeting 2 Form	5		
Work Log (and drafts)	5		
Self Evaluation	5		
Project Evaluation	5		
Group Member Evaluation	5		
Individual Contribution	20		
Outside consultation form	10		
TOTAL	**60**		
WRITING/VISUALS			
Surface Error	10		
Clarity	10		
Document Level Organization	10		
Concision	5		
Tone/Style/Formality	5		
Thematic Organization of Text	5		
Spatial Organization of Text	5		
Coherence of Text	5		
Cohesion of Text	5		
Uses strengths of the genre	5		
Relationship of Visuals to Text	5		
Thematic Organization of Visuals	5		
Spatial Organization of Visuals	5		
Consistent Formatting of Visuals and Text	5		
Rhetorical Effectiveness of Visuals	5		
Visuals are of Professional Quality (Style, Formality, Aesthetics)	5		
Effective Use of Fonts and Headings	5		
TOTAL	**100**		
CRITICAL THINKING			
Clearly establishes problems to be addressed	15		
Clearly outlines one solution	15		
Creates ONE clear topic/argument	10		
Evidence clearly connected to claims/argument	10		
Connects outside information to essays from class	10		
Considers the needs and values of the audience	5		
TOTAL	**65**		
PRESENTATION			
Meets time requirements	5		
Information is communicated effectively	10		
Visuals are incorporated effectively	10		
TOTAL	**25**		
Project total	**250**		**ALL DOCUMENTS DUE Tues. Nov 24th by 5pm**

Planning Meeting

Your Name: _____

Consulting Firm Name: _____

1. Identify the sub-topics you want to discuss.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Decide on the visuals that match these topics.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Decide which genre will work best for your project (Video, Website, PFP)

   _____

4. Decide on what type of equipment, sites, or software you will use.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   Some FREE Options:

   Microsoft Publisher is available free from OSU, it can do websites, posters, flyers, and pamphlets

   Microsoft PowerPoint can create hyperlinks and transfer into HTML to make a website

   Wikispaces.com offers free wiki space online

   Microsoft Movie Maker is available free online

   IMovies is free software included on most new Macs

5. Develop an agenda by setting specific tasks and assigning them dates.

   Include at least the following tasks:

   o   Any additional research to be done

   o   Software/equipment to be acquired

   o   Sections of the project that need to be written

       ▪   (Include each section on the agenda separately)

   o   Visuals to be collected

   o   Combining writing and visuals

   o   Editing final project

   o   Proofreading final project

6. Divide these tasks evenly among your group members/Create roles for different group members

Date	Group Member:	Group Member:	Group	Group	Group Member:
Oct 28					
Oct 30 (F)					
Nov 2 (M)					
Nov 4 (W)					
Nov 6 (F)					
Nov 9 (M)					
Nov 11					
Nov 13					
Nov 16					
Nov 18					
Nov 20					
Nov 23					

7. Establish a way to communicate and share information or drafts over the course of this project. (Email, Phone, Course Site, Wiki, Etc)

_____

Worksheet #2 – Style Sheet/Group Consistency

As you begin putting your document together you should create a style sheet and make decisions about the tone, purpose, breadth and style of your presentation. Answer the following questions as a group then complete the style sheet on the back.

1. Who is your intended audience?
    _____

2. List three things you think are important to them
    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____

3. List three things you think they will know about your subject and three things they will not.

    a. _____ a. _____
    b. _____ b. _____
    c. _____ c. _____

4. What do you want the marketing department to DO after they read your document?
    _____
    _____
    _____

5. What CLAIMS do you need to get them to BELIEVE for them to take this action?
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. What are the emotions you want them to feel?
   _____

7. What do you want the other company stakeholders to DO after they read your document?
   _____
   _____
   _____

8. What CLAIMS do you need to get them to BELIEVE for them to take this action?
   _____
   _____
   _____

9. What emotions do you want them to feel?
   _____

Rate your intended document on the following scales.

Formal	1	2	3	4	5	Informal
Technical/Complex	1	2	3	4	5	General/Simple
Persuasive	1	2	3	4	5	Informative
One Main Idea	1	2	3	4	5	Many Related Ideas

Pathos   1   2   3

Ethos   1   2   3

Logos   1   2   3

Style Sheet

In your style sheet, you should set up consistent formats, terms and styles for your document. Fill in the blanks below as a group.

TYPE	FONT	POINT	Bold/Itallics/Under	Color	Other/Position
Page Title					
Heading 1					
Heading 2					
Heading 3					
Figure Headings					
Bullets or Lists					
Body Text					

Figures: Describe any borders or shadows you will use on your pictures, flow charts, diagrams, etc.

_____

_____

Logos: Describe how you will use your logo. Where will it appear? How large should it be? Are there specific fonts you want to use with it? What color? How much space around it? Etc.

_____

Colors: Will you use colors to organize your information? What does each color indicate?

_____

Terms and Language

What is your committee called? _____

Will you refer to yourself as "we"? _____

Will you address the citizens or city council directly using "you" or "we"?
_____

What do you want to call your problem/s?
_____

What do you want to call your solution?
_____

What are the benefits?
_____

What are the costs?

_____

List any other terms you feel should be used consistently throughout the document?
_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Supervisor Consultation

You/your committee is required to bring:

- o Meeting 1: Planning
- o Meeting 2: Style and Consistency
- o RD (either in hard copy or electronic form) of your project

Questions to answer **BEFORE** the consultation

1) What are the evaluation criteria you are using for the analysis?

2) Why are these criteria the best for your evaluation?

3) What media will you use for your presentation?

4) Why is this the best type of text for your presentation?

Questions to answer **DURING/AFTER** the consultation (to be determined during the consultation)

APPENDIX C

PSA CAMPAIGN SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Peer Review Sheet: Proposal

	Yes	No	Comments
Does the introduction contain a clear purpose statement?			
Does the introduction explain **WHY** the problem that is the focus of the PSA Campaign is important to address?			
Does the discussion section explain the proposed approach to the PSA Campaign?			
Is the proposal accessible? Does the author use highlighting techniques, such as headings, boldface, underlining, and itemization? You also might want to consider if the author needs to use graphics, such as pie charts, bar charts, or tables.			
Does the conclusion/recommendation present what possible steps that could be taken next?			
In the recommendations, does the author tell the reader specifically what PSA approach, media, and target audience the group will use?			
Has the author effectively recognized the audience's level of understanding: specialist, semi-specialist, lay, management, subordinate, colleague, multiple, and internal/external; and written accordingly?			
Is the report accurate at a local level? Correct grammar and calculations make a difference. Mark any errors you find in spelling, punctuation, grammar, or mathematics.			
Does the report use at least 4-5 reputable sources to support the discussion and conclusion/recommendation sections?			
Does the author use appropriate persuasive/argumentative techniques? Does the author rely on pathos or logos too much?			

Additional Comments: (Anything global or local the author needs to consider)

Peer Review Sheet: Problem Report

	Yes	No	Comments
Does the subject line contain a topic and a focus?			
Does the introduction explain the purpose of the report?			
Does the discussion section of the report explain the problem clearly with supporting evidence?			
Is the discussion accessible? Does the author use highlighting techniques, such as headings, boldface, underlining, and itemization? You also might want to consider if the author needs to use graphics, such as pie charts, bar charts, or tables.			
Does the conclusion present what was discovered about the problem and suggest steps that could be taken next? Remember: the discussion states the facts; the conclusion decides what these facts mean.			
In the recommendations, does the author tell the reader what to do next or what could be considered the appropriate course of action?			
Has the author effectively recognized the audience's level of understanding: specialist, semi-specialist, lay, management, subordinate, colleague, multiple, and internal/external; and written accordingly?			
Is the report accurate at a local level? Correct grammar and calculations make a difference. Mark any errors you find in spelling, punctuation, grammar, or mathematics.			
Does the report use at least 3 reputable sources to support the discussion and conclusion/recommendation sections?			
Does the author use appropriate persuasive/argumentative techniques? Does the author rely on pathos or logos too much?			

Additional Comments: (Anything global or local the author needs to consider)

Media Text checklists

Use the following checklists while creating your PSA media texts.

Option 1: Poster, flyer, pamphlet series

➢ There are 3 documents

    o The pamphlet gives the most detail about the problem/solution

    o The poster highlights the main idea of the PSA

    o The flyer gives a bit more detail but is not overwhelming

➢ It is clear what approach the PSA takes (behavior changing or shift in attitude)

➢ All 3 documents are tied together using design principles

➢ All 3 documents clearly address the needs of primary/secondary audience(s)

➢ All 3 documents are professional in appearance and use correct citation where needed

➢ All 3 documents are distinct (although some common tie-ins are necessary)

Option 2: Audio files

➢ There are 3 audio files of at least 10 seconds in length (no more than 25 seconds each)

➢ Each audio spot focuses on a specific primary audience

➢ It is clear what approach the PSA takes (behavior changing or shift in attitude)

➢ All 3 spots are tied together using common language/structure

➢ All 3 spots are easily understood (voice is loud enough, tempo clear enough, any audio effects are not distracting)

➢ There is an accurate script for each audio spot with correct citation where necessary

➢ All 3 spots are distinct (although some common tie-ins are necessary)

Option 3: Video file

➢ There is one video file at least 30 seconds in length (no more than 60 seconds)

➢ The video focuses on meeting the needs of appropriate primary/secondary audience(s)

➢ It is clear what approach the PSA takes (behavior changing or shift in attitude)

➢ The video is easy to understand and all audio, images, and effects are professionally produced

➢ There is an accurate script for each audio spot with correct citation where necessary

APPENDIX D

FIRE PROTECTION PUBLICATIONS SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Effective and Engaging PowerPoint® Presentations

ACTIVITY 1: Comparing two styles of PowerPoint®
Directions: Use the area below to take notes during the two mock instructional presentations (one area is provided for each). Answer the specific questions listed and feel free to add any additional information or questions you may have about the two presentation styles. You will be using these notes during small group discussions after the presentations are finished.

Presentation #1:
1) What level of student participation is required by this model?

2) How frequently do you feel the need to take notes during this presentation?

3) On the scale below rate how well you feel you were paying attention to the information in the presentation:
    (not very much)   1   2   3   4   5   (paying complete attention)

Other notes:

_____
Presentation #2:
1) What level of student participation is required by this model?

2) How frequently do you feel the need to take notes during this presentation?

3) On the scale below rate how well you feel you were paying attention to the information in the presentation:
    (not very much)   1   2   3   4   5   (paying complete attention)

Other notes:

See article in an upcoming Speaking of Fire for more information!

Comparing Opinions on PowerPoint®

Experts recommend: **Students request:**

1) _____   1) _____

    a) _____   a) _____

    b) _____   2) _____

2) _____   3) _____

    a) _____   4) _____
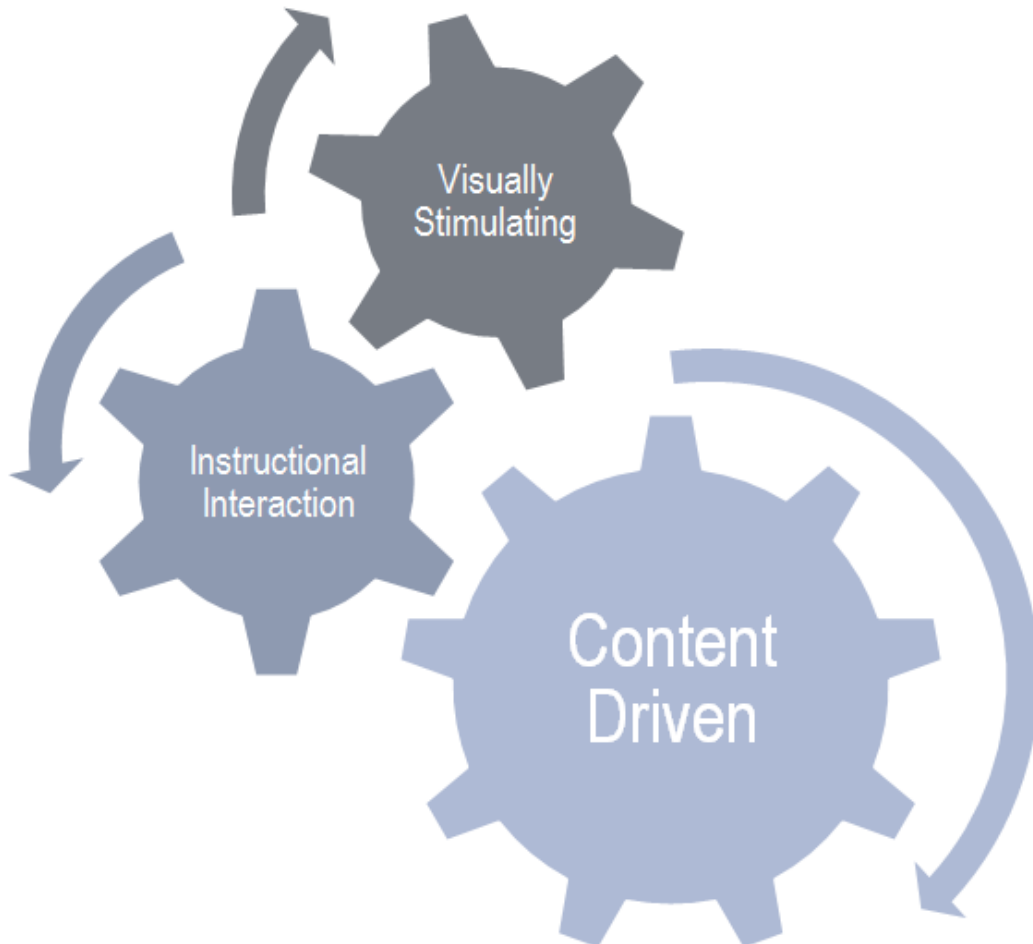
3) _____   a) _____

Based on: Mackiewicz, J. (2008). Comparing PowerPoint Expert's and University Students' Opinions about PowerPoint Presentations. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, 38*(2), 149-165.

ACTIVITY 2: What is your ideal PowerPoint® *Slide?*
Directions: Instructors will display directions on presentation screen.

Three Keys to Effective PowerPoint® *Presentations*
NOTES:

See article in an upcoming Speaking of Fire for more information!

EFFECTIVE AND ENGAGING
POWERPOINT® PRESENTATIONS

Fire Protection Publications
South Carolina Instructors Conference ~ February 2012

Clint

Intro who we are, what we are going to share
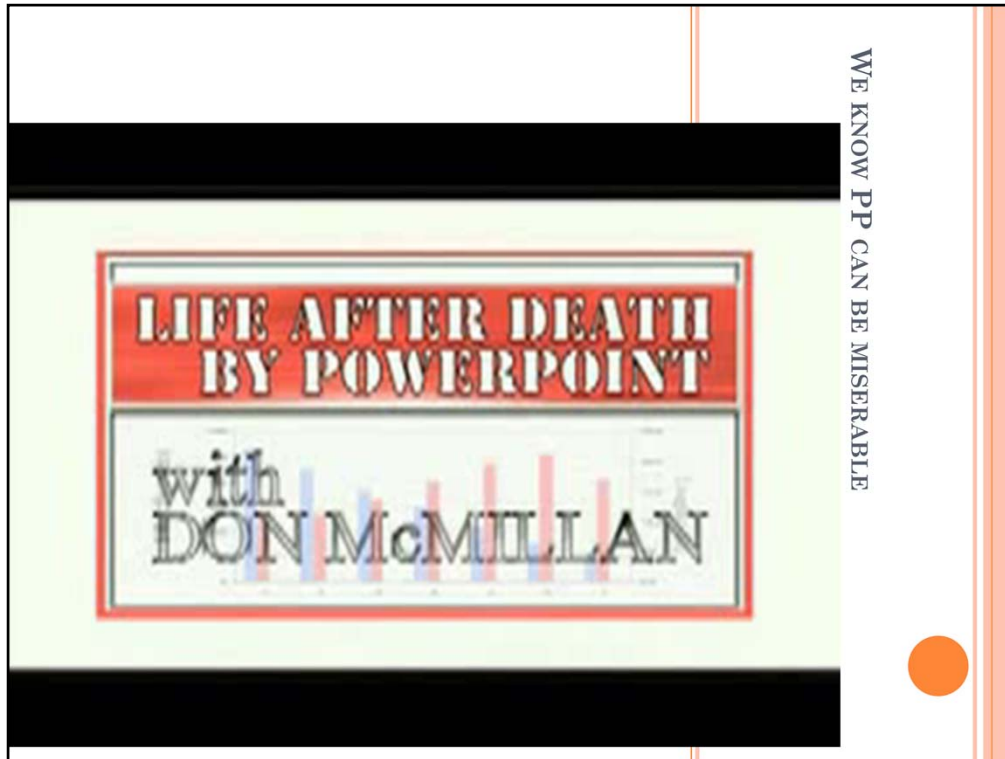
Elkie intro info:

Elkie Burnside

FPP Instructional Developer – with FPP for 3 years

PhD student in Professional Writing and Rhetoric – Emphasis on technology's impact on communication in the classroom

Certified Fire Service Instructor I

We will have 2 breaks, where the restrooms are, we will follow activity order on handout

Clint (must click to play video)
We all know PP can be miserable, this comic helps point that out!

Common flaws:

Reading every word off the slide
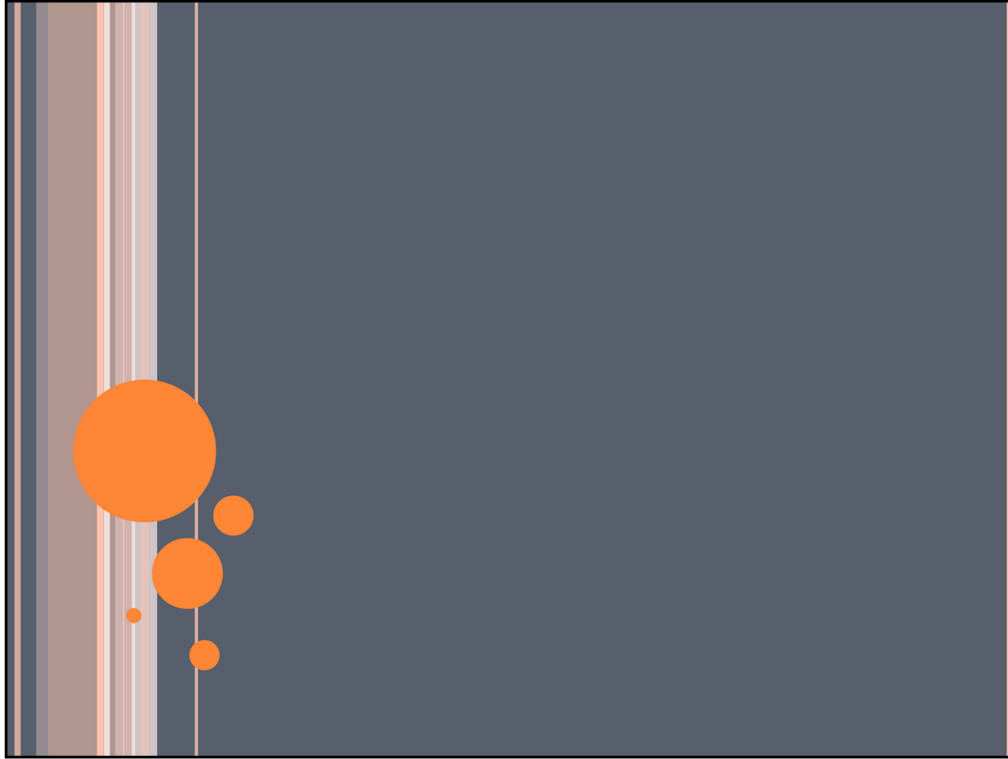
Too much text on a slide

Not using spell check – gives a poor impression

Using excessive bullet points

Bad color schemes – can't read contrasting colors

Over animation – too distracting

Too much information in graphs

Clint leads large group discussion (nothing will show on slide)
How can an instructor decide when it is appropriate to use PP?
When needing to give students information, to show video as a way to reinforce info, when it comes as part of a curriculum package

How can an instructor know if a presentation is effective?
Students pass quizzes/tests, are able to discuss concepts with understanding, students are not off-task

What are some rules you use when creating a PP presentation?
(see next slides)

COMMON PP RULES

RULE

- 10/20/30
  - Ten slides
  - 20 minutes total
  - 30 point font minimum

FLAWS

- Information should fit the situation, not a rule about slide numbers or time
- Difficult to show relationships and importance

Clint
Flaw #1 – May not be possible in Fire Service because of content requirements
Flaw #2 – In the Fire Service many ideas build on the others, so not showing relationship could make the concepts harder for students to understand

COMMON PP RULES

RULE	FLAWS
○ 6 x 6 rule • 6 words per line • 6 lines per slide	**○ Too much information on one slide** **○ Poor informational organization** **○ Leads to awkward wording and confusion** **○ Confusion about the rule**

Clint

Confusion can be: what is a line? How do you count words?

Predetermined Procedures

- Must have built-in flexibility
- Usually initiated by first unit
- Reduce chaos at scene
- Prevent duplication of effort and uncoordinated operations
- Describe assumption and transfer of command, and communications and tactical procedures

Haz Mat for First Responders
1–5

Clint asks for 2 or 3 volunteers to critique:
So using the issues we have previously discussed about the "errors" of powerpoint, how could you critique this slide?
*Follows 6 x 6, but how effective would 8 hours of this be?*

Clint and Elkie both lead (Split into two groups and discuss)
So what are the drawbacks for this style?
Emphasize how this style
1) Promotes poor classroom practices – Reading from the slides, no way to assess if students are understanding
2) Reduces student engagement and participation – Creates 'talking' head situation, students minds wander [Most studies show student attention drops between 10-25 mins into the lecture.]
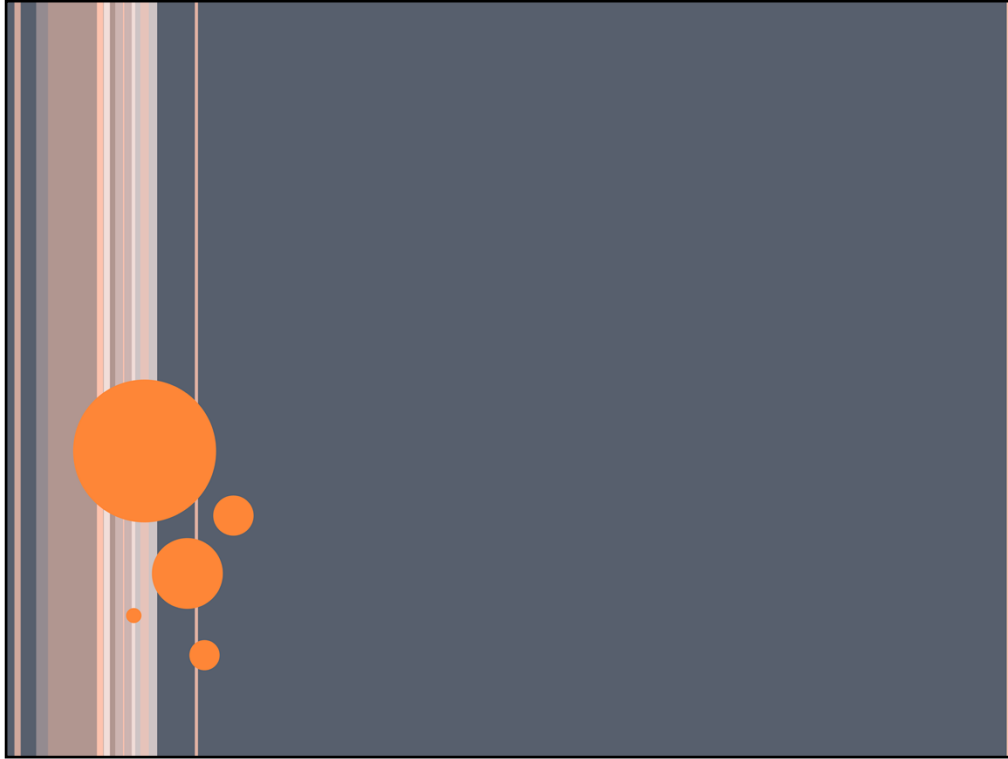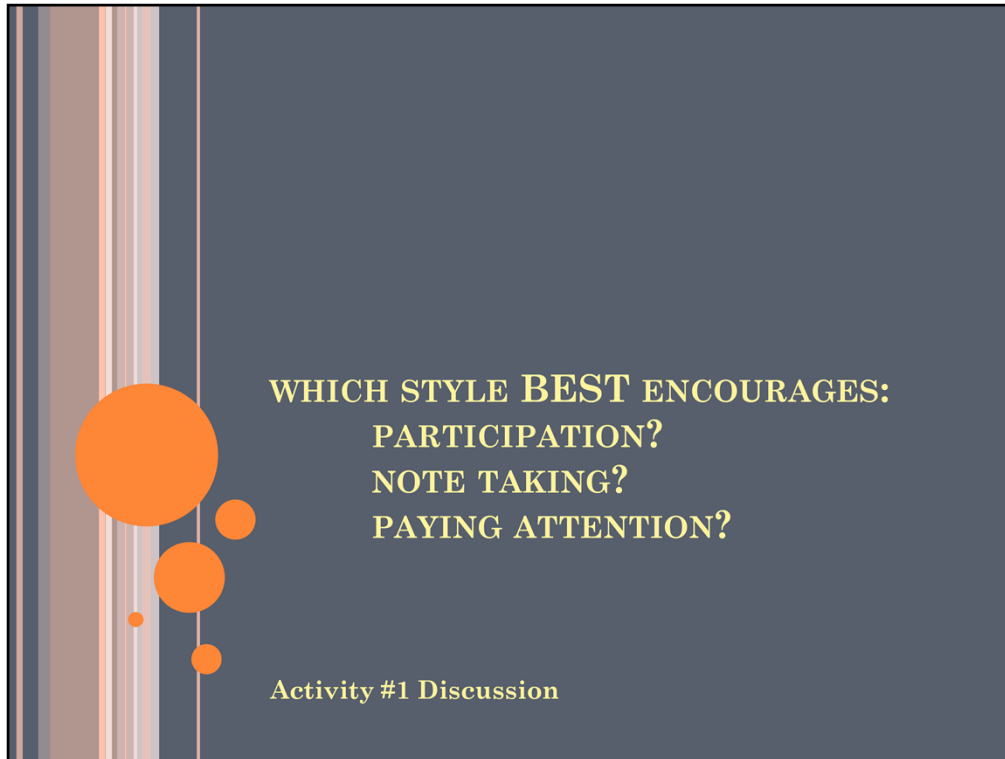
~10 min Break~
Give out handout as students return
Elkie gives directions (page 1 of handout)
Clint model's old style PP and then new style (in separate presentations)

Which style **BEST** encourages:
participation?
note taking?
paying attention?

Activity #1 Discussion

Elkie gives follow up directions
Break into smaller groups (4-5 students)
Discuss which style:
Encourages participation, note taking, paying attention

Clint and Elkie monitor by walking about
Emphasize there is no right or wrong, this is just their opinion

CONTENT-DESIGN-DELIVERY

- Content – Message the presenter delivers

- Design – Visual display of content

- Delivery – Manner that language accompanies the slides

Elkie (page 2 of the handout)

When creating PPs instructors focus on three main things

They often look for guidance in these things so experts have developed 'rules'

CONTENT-DESIGN-DELIVERY

Experts Recommend

○ Simplify
- Decrease information on slides
- Do not read off slides

○ Use visual elements
- Not simply decorative

○ Use animation sparingly

Elkie (animation)
In a 2008 study by Auburn University professor Jo Mackiewicz these were the most common recommendations made by experts
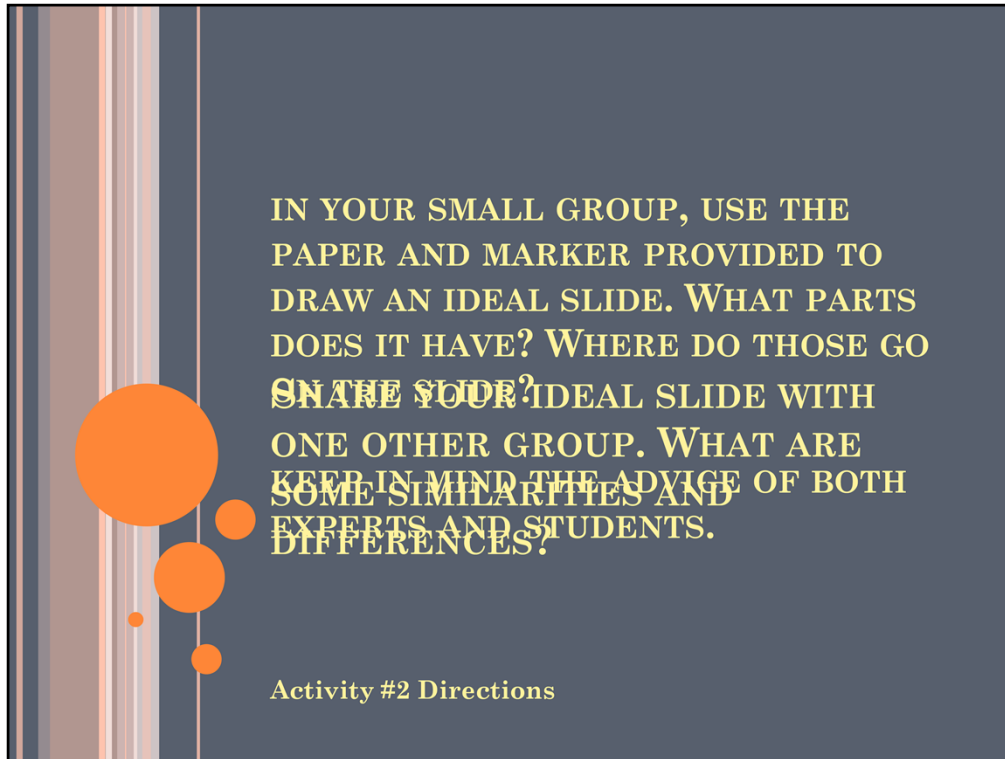
CONTENT-DESIGN-DELIVERY

Students Request

○ State the slide's main idea clearly
  • Full sentence
○ Limit text
○ Use relevant visuals
○ Limited animation
  • To transition between slides

Elkie (animation)
In that same study, Mackiewicz found that students view more PPs than they create. This dynamic leads them to be a more critical audience and drives the need for effective PPs. As such she asserted that instructors should listen to what students find useful in these types of presentations.

IN YOUR SMALL GROUP, USE THE PAPER AND MARKER PROVIDED TO DRAW AN IDEAL SLIDE. WHAT PARTS DOES IT HAVE? WHERE DO THOSE GO ON THE SLIDE?

SHARE YOUR IDEAL SLIDE WITH ONE OTHER GROUP. WHAT ARE SOME SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES?

KEEP IN MIND THE ADVICE OF BOTH EXPERTS AND STUDENTS.

Activity #2 Directions

~15 min Break~
Elkie leads activity 2
(direction 1 animation) Based on the ideas discussed so far, break into a small group and draw the layout of a slide you think meets these guidelines.

(direction 2 animation) Share that with another small group – Discuss differences and similarities

Elkie

3 keys

EFFECTIVE USE OF PP IS DRIVEN BY CONTENT NOT TECHNOLOGY.

Content Driven

Instructor Experience

Teaching tools

Skills Practice

CONTENT DELIVERY
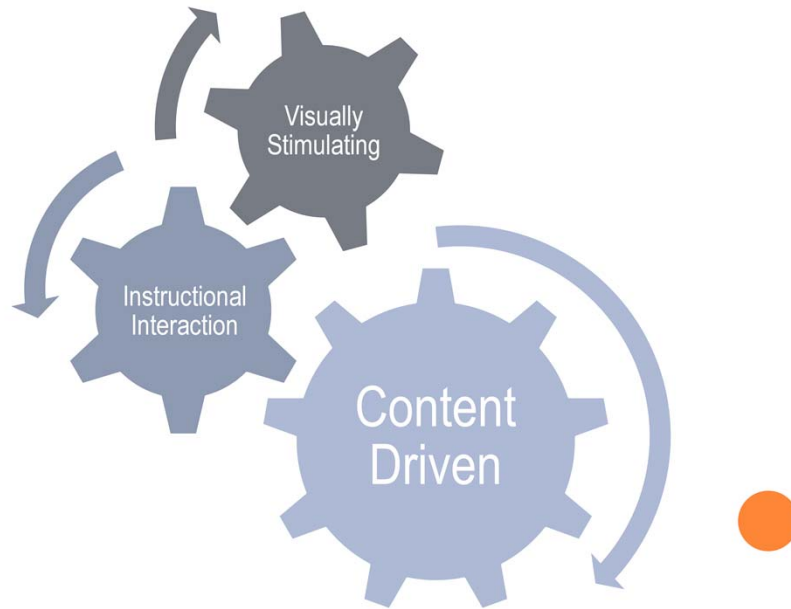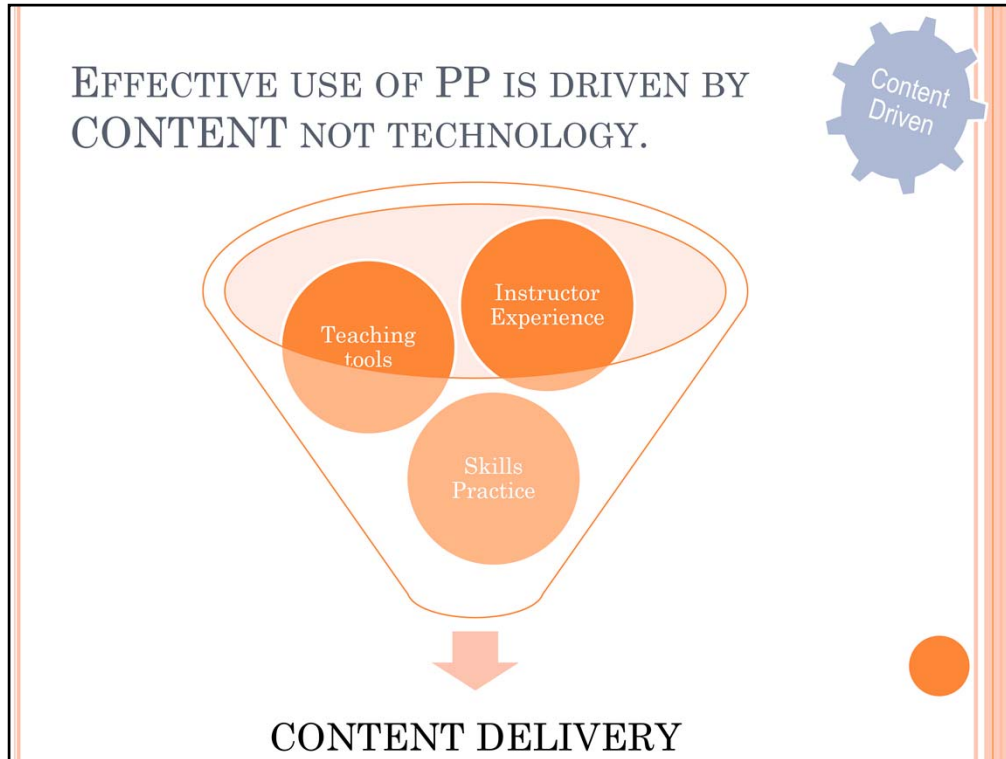
Elkie:

1)   Effective use of PP is driven by the CONTENT and audience needs, NOT the technology.

Instructors use tools, the tools should not use them. If PP is not the most effective way to give a message, then don't use it just because that is what is expected.

Elkie:

2) Effective use of PP will incorporate instructional interaction.

Most studies show that a students attention lags somewhere in the first 10-25 minutes of a lecture. Much research has been invested in finding ways to re-interest students (or to start that attention cycle over). 2009 findings show that one of the better ways is to incorporate "active learning" strategies.
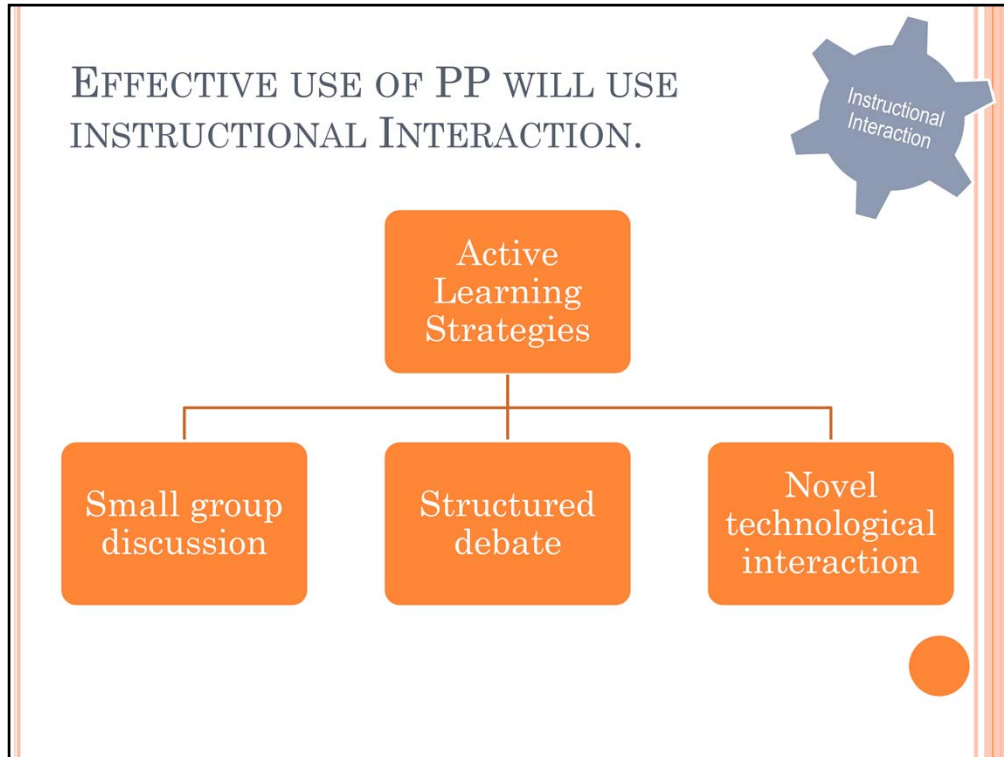
Using constructive and task-related activities to break up lecture – Typically:

Small group discussion or 'buzz group': Ask a question, give time to reflect, then tell the answer to a partner

Structured debate: Ask brief set of questions, then in small groups discuss just those issues

Novel form of technological interaction: Video clips, taking online survey discussing results in class [free survey creators online like Survey Monkey], interactive flash objects

EFFECTIVE USE OF PP SHOULD BE VISUALLY STIMULATING.

Visually Stimulating

Rescue methods vary depending on victim, there are specific dangers when moving injured victims.

Incline drag
- One rescuer, up or down stairway
- Unconscious victim

Blanket drag
- One rescuer
- Blanket, rug, or sheet

Webbing drag
- One rescuer
- Loop of 1-inch webbing

12–28

ifsta

Elkie:

3) Effective PP should be visually stimulating

Images should be relevant to content, not simply acting as a placeholder

This could be videos, or interactive flash objects

Students also see smart art not as text, but as images
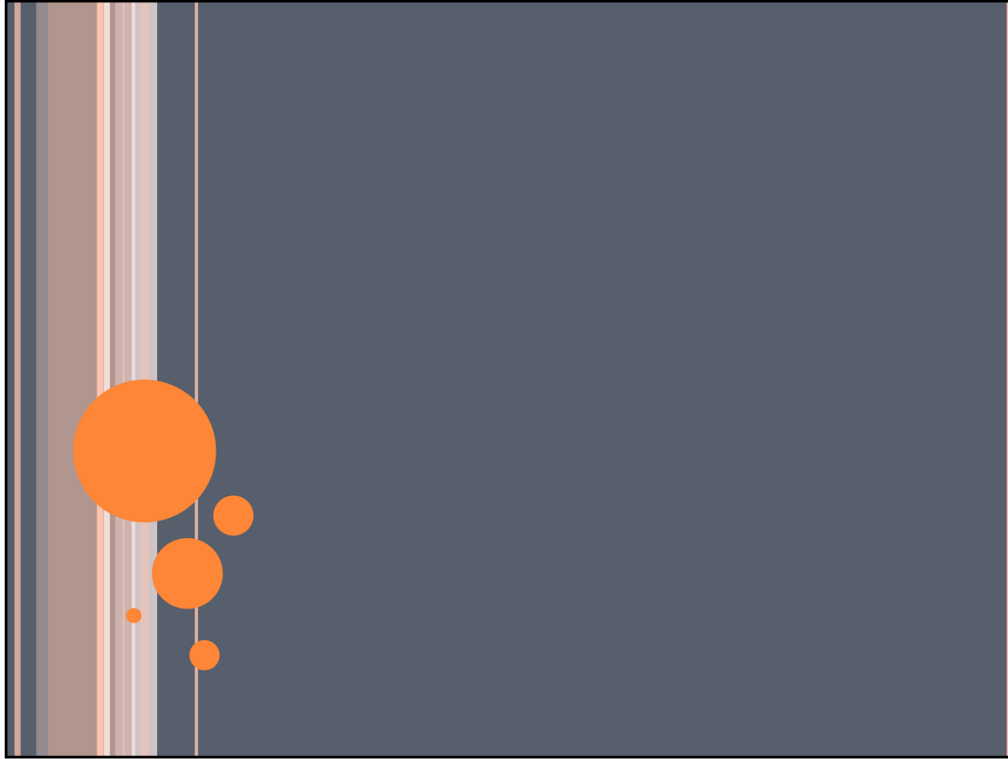
Elkie and Clint large group debrief: (nothing on the screen)

#1: What is the difference between a text heavy slide presentation and a graphic one?

Emphasize that students exists in a visually based world and in order to capitalize on keeping their attention during lectures we need to use the techniques discussed here to keep their working memory active.

#2: How does allowing more freedom in note-taking encourage students paying attention

In the guided style students will fill in the lines and not really hear the information. If they have freedom to take info that is relevant to them, they are more likely to review the notes.

#3: We have incorporated all the active learning strategies in OUR presentation – were they useful? How can you use these same strategies in a training classroom?

Emphasize that the active learning strategy does not have to be LONG to reactive the attention span. It can be as simple as asking 1-2 students to answer a review question. This shift in attention is enough to allow students to reset that 10-25 min attention clock.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Clint Clausing
FPP Projects Coordinator
Elkie Burnside
FPP Instructional Developer

If time: Any questions?

Instructional Improvements in IFSTA Curriculum

Elkie Burnside

To say that technology is changing the world that we live in would be an understatement at best. Attempting to write about all the ways that technology has influenced, changed, and impacted instructional environments would be like going to a five-alarm fire with a three-alarm assignment; it is an almost impossible task!

However, instead of being overwhelmed by all the instructional possibilities technology offers for the fire and emergency services training classroom, IFSTA is working to stay ahead of the curve, ensuring that you have materials that serve as useful instructional tools and incorporate technology in a way that interests students and creates an interactive learning environment. One specific way we are staying ahead of the curve is through the improvements made to our visual presentation components, also known as PowerPoint® (PP) presentations.

The Research Says…

Experts recommend that an effective PP® is simplified, incorporates visual elements, and strategically places animation. Not surprisingly, students request almost the same type of PP®. Students want to see each slide's main idea clearly and view presentations with limited text, relevant visuals, and limited animation.[1] Based on this research and user feedback, FPP instructional developers began to reconsider the way PP® works in our curriculum.

The curriculum staff investigated two main concepts in its search to better serve fire and emergency services training needs:

1. The first is the influence of technology on the way students learn. The curriculum staff became interested in the role of active learning strategies in the training classroom. Knowing that instructors only have a 10-25 minute window before student attention begins to wander, they began to look for ways to reboot that attention window.[2]

2. The second is the role of the instructor in the classroom. No one likes to listen to an instructor read off a PowerPoint®. As a matter of fact, studies show that speaking while a student is reading can actually impair his or her ability to learn that information. Knowing that fire and emergency services instructors have a large amount of information to give to students, the staff began to look for ways to make PP® a tool that instructors use, not a tool that uses instructors.

The Results Are…

As we prepare training materials for fire and emergency service instructors, we create visually interesting presentations that incorporate the best practices of technology and meet the unique needs of training classrooms. As a result, we provide a curriculum package that provides the following advantages:

IFSTA curriculum is content driven. As always, the applicable standard and information presented by the instructor are the most important aspects of your classroom. FPP
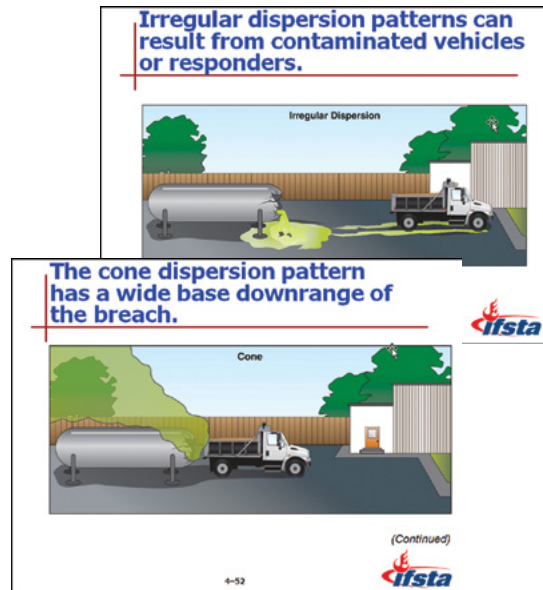
instructional developers do not want technology to dictate what instructors teach. Instead, our new style of PP®, that premiered with **Hazardous Materials for First Responders**, **Fourth Edition**, allows instructors to choose the content information that works with specific jurisdictional needs.

This continues IFSTA's tradition of developing customizable curriculum and high quality Lesson Outlines that have always been provided to instructors. You may notice that with less text on the screen, your students' note-taking habits change because they will focus on writing what they need instead of vaguely listening for key words suggested by some types of guided notes.

IFSTA curriculum emphasizes instructional interaction. Instructors must use active learning strategies in order to reactivate their students' 10-25 minute attention window during classroom instructional time. This curriculum incorporates various types of brief interactive moments into classroom instructional time.

First, our new style integrates discussion questions: both those built into the Lesson Outline and those that appear on blue screens in the PP®. These brief breaks in routine allow students to focus on the content being taught and allow instructors to informally assess if students understand the information before formal assessment begins.

Another way we add interaction in the PP® is through the use of interactive flash objects. This offers students an opportunity to focus on something other than the instructor. When stopping to work through interactive flash objects, instructors activate knowledge by helping students tie content to images, which is essential for students who are accustomed to interactive media environments.

As always, IFSTA learning activities provide students the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge they have gained in classroom sessions.

IFSTA curriculum is visually stimulating. Instructional use of visuals is one type of active learning strategy that can reactivate student attention window. Our new style uses graphics, smart art, videos, and interactive flash objects to help students tie instructional content to an image. Instructors who take advantage of this visual/verbal reinforcement give students a better chance to retain information. Instead of memorizing pages of text, students see relationships between ideas and recall information for tests in a way that works with their learning style.

FPP instructional developers continue to provide cutting edge, high-quality instructional materials for the fire and emergency services instructors. We will not stop here but will keep working to build materials that meet the needs of your classroom for both you and your students!

About the author:
Elkie Burnside is an Instructional Developer and has worked with FPP for three years. Currently a PhD student Elkie specializes in the impact of technology on the classroom.

Recommending Readings

[1] For more on expert versus student recommendations about using PP® in the classroom see: Mackiewicz, J. (2008). Comparing PowerPoint Expert's and University Students' Opinions about PowerPoint Presentations. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, 38*(2), 149-165.

[2] For more on active learning strategies see: Young, M. S., Robinson, S., & Alberts, P. (2009). Students pay attention!: Combating the vigilance decrement to improve learning during lectures. *Active Learning in Higher Education, 10*(41), 41-55.

APPENDIX E

VIDEO TRANSCRIPTS

Video 1.1

[On screen: Sinead O'Conner sings into microphone]

…children. Fight!

We find it necessary

We know we will win

We have confidence [O'Conner raises right fist over her head, puts it down] in the victory of

good, over [photo of Roman Catholic Pope held up] evil

[Rips photo into several pieces]

Fight the real enemy

[Throws photo pieces away]

(Wilson, 1992)

Video 4.1

[On screen title: Using Prezi as an Alternative Digital Presentation. Navigation through sample Prezi used throughout explanation.]

As you can see I designed the Prezi to match the content of the original PowerPoint® for the Instructor level. It includes the lesson goal as well as several of the learning objectives. Well, all of the learning objectives are listed because that is the style that was being used, where the instructor would first establish all of the learning objectives and then move into the content of the course. And as you can see here I've modeled that style in this Prezi.

This was one of the earlier Prezi's, again I had just learned about using Prezi, and so some of the composition of this Prezi isn't exactly what I would do now. It still gives a good view of how an instructor, again, who wouldn't have any previous experience using Prezi might actually scroll through each of these before getting into the content.

I am not going to show you all of the Prezi itself; again, this would typically take about an eight hour session to get through one lesson, so I'm just going to show you some of the content groupings. So basically I just kind of did a content grouping around every learning objective and covered the different information. I just directly translated from the PowerPoint® so if there was an image on the PowerPoint® I used it in the Prezi. You can see this one section on andragogy as an example of that.

The next thing I kind of wanted to show you is also the different ways that I tried to incorporate movement. Again, I think I would compose this differently now having learned some lessons about the way Prezi was given. This is where a lot of the students objected and said that they didn't really see the necessity for this movement here. It almost in a way distracted them a little bit from what they were trying to learn and understand. But one of the things, the

advantages of Prezi, is that it does show the visual spatial relationship. So, especially when I was going through these levels of lists, that was a good thing to have to show that each level kind of built on the other. And so it was a way that Prezi almost did answer some of what we were trying to find a solution to, which was to show information, the cognitive information that we did in a way that helped students build together the ideas that they were looking for.

The next piece I want to talk about is that this content area about providing motivation is actually part of what helped me formulate the final strategy. If you look here, these suggestions on showing classroom knowledge, using motivation, using visual aids and demonstrations, tying information, gaining interest – all of these kinds of things are things that the manual was saying are good ways to instruct, but none of those ways were incorporated into the current curriculum style.

You'll notice here this section is trying to incorporate some videos, there are little video clips in the Prezi that the instructor would play and he would lead these discussions. I wasn't satisfied with having them grouped together like this, all in one section and the students also critiqued that that kind of kept all of the interaction in just one moment and that it would have been nice to see it further.

And then the last piece that I wanted to kind of highlight here is that this is the moment in which I realized how SmartArt® could work. That cone of learning triangle is SmartArt® and it was the first time I tried to experiment with it and it was very useful in pushing me toward the direction that we ended up using for the new Prezi, or the new PowerPoint® style.
[On screen summary: Prezi did not work in the ways I had hoped, so I continued on my journey to find a new digital presentation style for FPP.]

Video 4.2

[On screen title: Using IFSTA Curriculum: Incorporating Interactivity in the Fire and Emergency Services Training Classroom]

Hello and welcome to "Using IFSTA Curriculum," today we are going to explore the benefits of using an interactive instructional approach in the Fire and Emergency Services Training Classroom. [On screen image: Interlinked cog visualization of three principles: Content driven, Instructional Interaction, Visually Engaging] IFSTA Curriculum materials are developed with three key instructional principles in mind. [Cogs move together] These three principles work together to build a classroom environment that is beneficial to both students and instructors. This video will explore how these principles are met in IFSTA's curriculum materials and give specific strategies to instructors on how to use these materials in the classroom.

[On screen title: Our first principle is that classrooms should be content driven.] The first principle is to provide a classroom that is content driven. All IFSTA curriculum materials begin with validated manual content tied to an appropriate standard. Our style requires instructors to use the provided lesson outline [On screen: Sample image of lesson outline flies in, pauses, then moves out] in conjunction with the prepared presentation [On screen: Sample image of PowerPoint® flies in].

[On screen: Sample PowerPoint® slide and corresponding lesson outline section side by side. Content driven sub-title cog] The lesson outline is prepared to cue the instructor to the information that needs to be taught. This approach means that instructors will not see text on the slide to read from. [On screen: Highlighting connects information on PowerPoint® slide to

corresponding information in lesson outline.] Instructors should instead, preview the information in the lesson outline so that the cues in the PowerPoint® are useful during classtime.

[On screen: Sample PowerPoint® slide. Content driven sub-title cog]
The PowerPoint® is prepared to identify important content for students by using a title sentence [On screen: Highlight label for Title Sentence] that identifies the main idea of the slide. [On screen: Highlight label for Slide Content] Then slide content reinforces and summarizes the information being taught by the instructor.

[On screen title: Our second principle is that classrooms must encourage instructional interaction. Photo slideshow of instructor teaching class] The second principle for IFSTA curriculum is to encourage the instructional interaction needed by today's learners. Student attention span decreases after a ten to twenty-five minute attention window our curriculum components use various methods to create an environment that increases student interaction by reactivating that attention window through a variety of methods.

[On screen: Sample lesson outline with Review Question box highlighted. Instructional interaction sub-title cog] Instructors can use review questions to allow students to discuss content in small groups. [On screen: Photo of students in small group discussion] These are identified in the lesson outline and presentation. Questions can be asked to an entire class, or instructors can quickly pair students up for short discussions.

[On screen: Sample lesson outline with Instructor Note box highlighted. Instructional interaction sub-title cog] Use instructor notes to generate large group discussions about key content. These are identified in the lesson outline. [On screen: Photo of instructor and students in large group discussion] Opening the manual and noting important information helps reinforce the need to know the content of the course text.

[On screen: Sample lesson outline with Video Clip thumbnail highlighted. Instructional interaction sub-title cog] Use embedded video clips to tie content to real life situations. [On screen: Enlarged Video Clip thumbnail from lesson outline] These are identified in the lesson outline and the presentation with special markers. [On screen: Sample embedded video, plays at reduced volume during next section] To play a video, click the image, and allow the video to play. [On screen: Video is paused] You may want to stop the video and ask questions, or let the video play all the way and have a brief discussion. Click outside the video to advance to the next slide.

[On screen: Sample lesson outline with Interactive slide thumbnail highlighted. Instructional interaction sub-title cog] Use embedded interactive flash objects to tie large sections of content to a memorable visual. [On screen: Interactive slide thumbnail enlarges] These are identified in the lesson outline and in the presentation with special markers. [On screen: Sample interactive object] Scroll over the image to identify hot spots [On screen: Mouse explores image, hot spot turns darker when selected] and click to show content. [On screen: Interactive object changes to highlight one section and present information] Buttons can be selected one at a time or all at once. [On screen: Mouse selecting three buttons individually so information appears, then

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selecting last button in a series so all information appears] New hot spots will activate [On screen: Mouse selects new hot spots and corresponding buttons until all information on interactive object is displayed] as instructors proceed through the information. At the end of an object use the reset button in the bottom right to quiz students over information just covered. [On screen: Mouse highlights reset button in bottom right and interactive object resets to original state]

[On screen title: Our third principle is that classroom presentations should be visually engaging. Image of sample PowerPoint® slide] The third principle used in IFSTA curriculum is to create instructional presentations that are visually engaging. Our PowerPoint® style uses a variety of visuals to allow students to see relationships between ideas and recall information for assessments in a way that works with various learning styles.

[On screen: Sample Illustration. Visually engaging sub-title cog] Illustrations from the manual are used to tie content with a visual that can be easily remembered.

[On screen: Sample flash object. Visually engaging sub-title cog] Flash objects are also used to show relationships between content and real life application.

[On screen: Sample video clip playing at reduced volume. Visually engaging sub-title cog] Video clips create the opportunity to engage student's knowledge of a topic and help them tie new knowledge to existing knowledge. Note that you can control the volume of a video clip here [On screen: Mouse moves to volume control] on the play bar.

[On screen: Smart Art example. Visually engaging sub-title cog] Smart Art is used to show visual relationships presented in course content.

[On screen: Sample lesson outline with content highlighted. Visually engaging sub-title cog] All of these visuals are drawn directly from the lesson outline content. [On screen: Corresponding PowerPoint® slide to match highlighted section of lesson outline] Instructors may notice that with less text on the screen student's note taking habits may change [On screen: New section of lesson outline highlighted, corresponding PowerPoint® slide example changes] because they will focus on writing what they need instead of vaguely listening for key words suggested by some types of guided notes.

[On screen title: Interactive Learning: Incorporating Interactivity in the Fire and Emergency Services Training Classroom] Instructors should prepare students for this by providing note taking tips. These can be found in IFSTA's student video "Interactive Learning" included in your curriculum package. The student video gives specific note taking strategies to use and recommends other habits students can use to become interactive learners.

[On screen title: Thank you for your time.] Thank you for taking the time to learn more about your IFSTA curriculum. We know these tips will be useful for your classroom and hope you will replay this video as needed.

VITA

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Computers and Writing ....May 2012
Techno/rhetorician or Compo/technician: How Does a Digital Scholar Define an Academic Identity?

Conference on College Composition and Communication ....March 2012
The Stargate of Composition Classrooms: The Power of Multimodal Author/Creators to Transect the Academic Universe and its Boundaries

Conference on College Composition and Communication ....March 2009
Effects of Simulation Pedagogy on Students Writing Visual Texts

Conference on College Composition and Communication ....March 2005
Sunup to Sundown: The Rural Working Class Academic