

EH 101 Unit 1

What is Writing Supposed to Mean to Me ANYWAY?: Intro to Writing/Reading/Generative AI

Deliverables: Project 1: Defining your stance on Writing and AI

I designed this unit to serve as the introduction to the course. In place of the common personal or literacy narrative, this introductory unit prepares students to complete a short piece in which they announce their stance on what they value about writing and how they will allow GenAI into their writing lives. The audience is their fellow FYC classmates.

Three Major Features of the Unit:

GenAI literacy

First, students read and learn about what GenAI is, how it works, its capabilities and limitations, and the thorny ethical and existential issues it animates. They spend time in class playing with the tool, discussing its output with their peers, and engaging in critical conversations about its strengths and weaknesses. To demonstrate their knowledge, students work in groups to prepare informal 3 minute oral presentations arguing for or against using GenAI as a first-year composition student. Groups volunteer to stage a brief mock debate which the instructor moderates, allowing each group opening arguments, prep time before giving brief counterarguments, and an opportunity for a final rebuttal.

Personal Voice

As they learn about the technology, students also begin to reflect on what it means to have a personal “voice” as a writer and how to negotiate that voice when writing for different contexts. For homework, they read Vershawn Ashanti Young’s 2010 piece from the *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*, “Should Writer’s Use Their Own English?” Before discussing Young’s article in class, the instructor should lead the group in an exercise to set group discussion norms to ensure that conversations remain respectful, kind, and productive.

Critical Reading

Lastly, students begin to learn about and practice strategies for critical reading. Following composition theorists such as Alice Horning, David Jolliffe, Michael Bunn and others, this unit emphasizes the link between reading and writing, recognizing reading as an essential part of the writing process. Using Ellen Carillo’s free, student-facing textbook,

A Writer's Guide to Mindful Reading, students begin to practice using reading strategies for the texts they read for homework and reflect on their experience using the strategies in writing and discussion.

See below for a comprehensive overview of the three-week unit including homework assignments, in-class activities, and scaffolding for completing Project 1.

EH101 Writing FOR and ABOUT Visual Media

WK1

HWK

- Read: (1) Vershawn Ashanti Young “Should Writers Use They Own English” (2) Lucas Mearian’s “[What are LLMs and how are they used in generative AI?](#)” Turn in Reading Journals for each assigned reading (write a minimum of 150 words per reading journal)

Monday: What is writing?

- In class writing prompt:

A: Write about either your all-time favorite or current favorite piece of audio-visual media (music video, film, video game, YouTube video). What is it, and what about it is so awesome, compelling, and interesting to you?

B: What do you know about Generative AI like ChatGPT? What is your relationship to this technology? How do you think they should be used? How do you plan to use, or not use them, for help on school work?

- Introduce self, class (Writing-Reading and AI/Writing-Reading about AV Media)
- WATCH IN CLASS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAwbvGywdOc&t=1s>

- Discussion: What is writing? Why should we be here?
- Intro the first assignment (gloss) then intro first homework (reading journals)
- Syllabus highlights

Wednesday: What is reading?

- Malone lecture on “What is reading/Mindful reading”
- Option to work on homework IN CLASS
- Continue syllabus highlights/discussion of class norms

Friday: Playing with GenAI//Critiquing Output [WARN STUDENTS about PRIVACY CONCERNS with giving information to open GPTs]

- Direct students to access the GenAI app of choice (Claude, ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot)

- Choose one of the prompts below, and model for students your process of prompting and prompting to adjust for different details/structure/tone/length
- Ask students to choose one of the prompts below and play around just as you did.
 1. Write a biography of (insert your favorite artist/celebrity/iconic figure here).
 2. Tell the story of the _____ family (insert your family here and consider adding a few relevant details about your family to the prompt)
 3. Write a 500 word personal narrative (prompt it with the basics of some personal story)
- Project the following three questions on the board, and ask students to discuss with one peer next to them.
 1. What was most surprising about your experience prompting and playing around?
 2. What impressed you the most about the output?
 3. What problems/drawbacks did you encounter?
- Whole group discussion about where this tool is helpful, where it might have problems, what we gain, what we lose from using this, where YOUR voice and information and particularities are important
- In-class writing reflection on their experience
- Small group question about readings//Ticket out the door: response to readings

WK2

HWK:

- Read and annotate (1) Bhaskar Chakravorti's "AI's Trust Problem", and (2) Mike Bunn "How to Read Like a Writer"
- Turn in reading journals for both readings including explanation of how they used MAPPING (turn in map of one)

Monday: Reading Strategies and Developing Your Voice

- Intro Reading Strategies Previewing/Skimmming/Mapping
- Class project: map the Young piece from last week
- Discussion: What is your voice? Brainstorm unique elements of YOUR own voice
- Homework reminder//Prep for Next Class's DEBATE

Wednesday: Debate prep for: Should FYC Students Use ChatGPT

Start by watching: [AI for Education: Using AI Critically in the Classroom](#)

Students read [Time Magazine's article](#) about Open AI's use of Kenyan workers to train their early models

1. (REMINDER THAT THEY SHOULD KEEP A DOCUMENT where they highlight RELEVANT CLASSROOM CONVERSATIONS to cite for their project 1)
2. Divide class into half, assign position either "FYC Students SHOULD NOT use GenAI" or "FYC Students SHOULD use GenAI"

3. Students open all the readings they've done prior to this class meeting. They refer to the video and article that began this class period. They engage in a 5 minute individual brainstorming session where they write down all the possible ideas for their assigned argument (for or against using GenAI in FYC)
4. Remainder of the class: split into groups of 3 and plan 3-minute opening statement and prep for possible counterarguments. ALL groups should be prepared to debate. Instructor can tell the groups beforehand that only one debate will take place OR can tell them that multiple debates will occur simultaneously so that they are all equally prepared

Format

1. FYC students SHOULD use GenAI: 3-minute Persuasive Presentation (opposing group takes notes to prepare cross examination/counterarguments)
3 minutes prep time in between
2. 2 minutes for SHOULD NOT USE to pose counterarguments and cross examine Should Exist group (anyone from group can ask questions and anyone from group can respond, must raise hand)
3. FYC students SHOULD NOT use GenAI: 3-minute Persuasive Presentation (affirming group takes notes to prepare cross examination/counterarguments)
3 minutes prep time in between
4. 2 minutes for SHOULD USE to pose counterarguments and cross examine
3 minutes prep time in between
5. 1 minute closing statement from SHOULD USE
3 minutes prep time in between
6. 1 minute closing statement from SHOULD NOT USE

F: Debate/Discuss/Reflect

- Ask for groups to volunteer to debate. Only one SHOULD USE and one SHOULD NOT USE group will debate, ultimately. The others will watch and take notes.
- Hold debate
- Class discussion and voting about which side "Won"
- Students complete written reflection on how the debate or debate prep impacted their beliefs about GenAI and writing; ask them to consider how the debate or debate prep will influence what they write for their Project 1 piece.

WK3

HWK:

First draft of Project 1

Monday: Catchup Day//Discovering your own Voice

- Review requirements for Project 1

- Discussions about last week readings today
- Sharing examples of “voice” in writing: instructor shares, students brainstorm

Wednesday: In-Class Writing Workshop

- Students take time to do any productive work towards completing a first draft of Project 1; instructor models options for drafting; students can discuss with peers or ask questions of instructor
- They turn in their process work at the end of the class period to demonstrate active work, receiving a check minus, check, or check plus to indicate satisfactory progress

Thursday: Students turn in first drafts and the instructor chooses between 2-4 examples that would be good candidates for modeling revision. Instructor emails/asks student permission to use in class to model revision.

Friday: Modeling revision and peer review

- First half of class: after receiving student permission, instructor projects one student draft and reads along with students, asking questions mainly about STRUCTURE and AUDIENCE, getting student input into how to revise to organize it so that it helps the audience understand the main points
- Students engage in peer review, asking the same questions from the modeling session that the instructor demonstrates