# **Unit 3 - Writing in a New Genre**

At the end of Unit 2, we asked the question: What is the most important thing you learned and what audience do you think needs to know about it? **For Unit 3**, we ask ourselves: what is the best genre to tell that audience the information you learned in Unit 2?

In this unit, you will write about the subject you researched in Unit 2 in the genre of your choice, preferably one of the genres you have already researched, but I'm open to other options. Whatever you choose, it should be the genre that best reaches the audience you think needs to hear about your topic.

How are you going to get your target audience to listen to your message? Will they listen to a political speech? Watch a video essay? Read a magazine article? Read/watch a scene from a play/film? Read the lyrics to a song? You can use pretty much any genre, **as long as it’s one that’s new to you and appropriate for the audience you choose.** No middle school kid is going to sit still for a 30-minute political speech even if it’s about how to keep from being bullied. Wrong genre, poor analysis of your audience. All I ask is that you make sure it isn’t offensive (racist, sexist, homophobic, religion-intolerant). Also, no Power Point.\*

Once you've written your new genre text, you’ll also write an Artist’s Statement to go along with it, something that tells us what you intended to do, who your intended audience was, what you went through to get it done, how well you think it turned out, and where you think it might be published/shared with that audience. There will be a handout on the Artist’s Statement when that time comes.

### **So, to recap, in Unit 3, you will:**

* Write about the research you did in Unit 2
* Address the audience you think needs to know what you learned in Unit 2 (just the most important parts)
* Write in the genre that you think will best reach that audience
* Write a one-page Artist’s Statement that explains your process

### **What you’ll be graded on:**

**Genre**: Whatever you choose must actually fit in that genre. A video that’s just a single picture for two minutes isn’t a video because it doesn’t move; it doesn’t engage us the way a video/film should. When you do your proposal, you’ll have a chance to set up what the rules and conventions are for that genre.

**Appropriateness for audience:** If you’re doing something for 4th grade students, it shouldn’t be full of graduate school words. Appropriate means word choice, approach to topic/issue, use of visuals if you use them – does the way you “wrote” your genre piece fit what would work best for this audience?

**Effectiveness of message:** We’ll share these in class so you’ll get a chance to see if you got your point across. Did it fulfill your purpose?

**Length/Timeliness:** The genre piece can be whatever length it needs to be based on the conventions of the genre, but it should be substantial. One meme is not really enough for 20% of your grade in a major English class.

**Artist Statement:** Did you thoughtfully reflect on your process, even if things didn’t turn out quite how you wanted?

*\*Why? Because first of all, Power Point isn’t a genre, it’s a tool. You use Power Point to do something, like make a presentation or give a talk. Second of all, you’ve probably done a Power Point before, and the purpose of this assignment is for you to learn to write something new. Third, there have been a lot of studies done on the most boring forms of delivery, and Power Point is consistently at the top!*

**Helpful resources:**

The New York Times on creating a Podcast:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/22/learning/making-a-podcast-that-matters-a-guide-with-examples-from-23-students.html>

The NYT has an entire list of “Mentor Texts” that help you write articles like a sports article and a personal health column. It’s quite useful. It can be found here: <https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-mentor-texts>

**More resources for creating texts**

Free music:<https://www.purple-planet.com/>

Free sound effects:<http://soundbible.com/free-sound-effects-1.html>

Copyright safe images (photos, clip art, etc):<https://search.creativecommons.org/>

Stock videos (and photos): [https://www.pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com/)

Illustrations you can manipulate:<https://undraw.co/illustrations>

<https://www.canva.com/> is a mostly free (especially if you upload your own images) design program that does everything from posters and banners to storyboards and comic strips. A real go-to tool for a lot of people.

Posters, infographics, etc.:

* <https://www.canva.com/> The images with crowns on them are extra, but Canva is free if you use your own images.
* <https://piktochart.com/> The free version has a 40MB image upload limit.

Online comic maker:<https://www.makebeliefscomix.com/>

Audio creator/editor: <https://www.audacityteam.org/> [easy to use with a full range of tools, lots of videos about how to use it]

* Here’s a review about free audio editing software [https://www.techradar.com/news/the-best- free-audio-editor](https://www.techradar.com/news/the-best-free-audio-editor)

Screencasting/video recording:

* <https://screencast-o-matic.com/> Screencast-o-matic is free if you want to do screen capture videos from your laptop. Word of warning: if you really want to do some close editing work, it will cost, but for the basics, it’s fine. You can upload the resulting video to YouTube. A lot of faculty use it.
* YouTube Studio will give you lots of tutorials about how to create videos.

**ARTIST STATEMENT GUIDELINES**

## Explaining the rationale behind our actions and decisions is an important kind of reflective writing because it makes visible what is otherwise invisible. You can choose to write an e-mail in Comic Sans font, but unless you explain why, the choice may seem mysterious and odd to readers. Composers of all sorts often write an Artist’s Statement for their audience that explains their inspirations, intentions, and choices in their creative and critical processes. It helps the reader understand the process that led to the final product by providing insight into what the author set out to do, how they did it, and what they might do to further improve the piece. A successful Artist’s Statement reflects your understanding of your chosen genre (and the elements, style, design, and use of sources that characterize it) – and of your specific rhetorical situation (your reasons for composing, your audience, how you use rhetorical appeals, and your choice of mode and medium).

## In your Author’s Statement, you must do the following:

## *Provide context.* It’s useful to give background on your composition, such as how you became interested in the topic, what were your inspirations, or, if you’ve created a series of related works, how the pieces all fit together.

## *Discuss your specific rhetorical situation and related choices:* In other words: answer the question “why?” Why did you decide to write in the genre you did? Why did you choose the audience you did? Why did you decide to talk about this particular aspect of your research? What is the purpose of your piece?

* *Explain your choice of genre and how you worked within its conventions.* Maybe you created a photo essay. An accompanying statement—in which you explain why you found the photo essay to be the best way to communicate your ideas about gun control—would go a long way toward helping your viewers get the most out of your work
* *Reflect on how it went.* Use this as an opportunity to look back at your composition and evaluate the extent of your achievement as well as note what you would have done differently or better.

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## \*Note: This should be a fluid, cohesive document that reflects on and justifies the rhetorical choices in your New Genre Project. Do not just merely answer each question in list form.

**Schedule**

**Monday, Nov 2**

**10-11:40 class session.** Begin Unit 3 – Writing in a New Genre

***Due by end of day Wednesday, Nov 4:***

Throughout the semester, we’ve seen people talking about (for example) education in a variety of different genres. In each of these instances, the author is trying to reach a different audience and they pick the genre that will best speak to that audience. Think about Lynda Barry’s comic or Jamila Lyiscott’s poem. These are all different genres. Why might one write in any of these genres? Who do these genres reach?

In this unit, you’ll be writing about the topic you researched in Unit 2 for an audience of your choosing-- so now it’s time to think about what genre you think will best reach *your* audience!

**WRITE/Post on OpenLab:** You will need to write a proposal of at least 300 words outlining what you plan to do for Unit 3. This proposal should tell us:

* A 1-2 sentence statement of what you want to teach your audience (the most important thing you learned in Unit 2)
* The audience you are trying to reach
* The genre you are planning to write in and why you chose it
* A plan -- how do you intend to get started?
* Anything you might be worried about. What are your concerns about finishing this project?

**Title it “Proposal – *your name”* Category Unit 3, Tag “Proposal”**

**Wednesday, Nov 4**

**10-11:40 class session.** Suggestions, help, ideas…

***Due by end of day Sunday, Nov 8:***

**READ (and comment):** Read at least two of your colleagues’ Unit 3 proposals, and comment on them. Comments should be at least 200 words. ***Please*** do not simply say “sounds great!” because that is not helpful! Think about the kind of things that might be helpful to you as you embark on this project. Here are some ideas:

* A specific publication or website you think the author could write for
* A question or comment to help narrow down the audience: “You say you want young people to watch this video essay, but there’s no publication all young people watch. Are you actually trying to reach New Yorkers?”
* A question or comment to help narrow down the genre: “There are a lot of different kinds of articles in the world. You could be writing for a newspaper like the New York Times or a website like Buzzfeed, and the writing is totally different for both. Can you be more specific?”
* You can also just talk about things in the proposal you find especially cool or exciting.

Remember--you don’t have to take all the advice other writers give you. It’s still your decision (and you’re still responsible!) But it is often helpful to hear what other people think.

**WRITE:** Start working on Unit 3 - New Genre piece.

**Monday, Nov 9**

**10-11:40 class session.** Help for projects

***Due by end of day Wednesday, Nov 11:***

**READ:** “Clean Up Your Mess” <http://www.visualmess.com/>

**WRITE:** Post an anonymous addition to this Padlet wall and feel free to comment on what other people have said.

<https://padlet.com/dblain1/f9ygb8y28vge42qz>

Questions: What are your pet peeves about reading online (or even off) – I’m not talking about the meaning of the words, I’m talking about the layout and design. What makes a website (or any document, really) “messy”?

**Wednesday, Nov 11**

**10-11:40 class session.** Help for projects

***Due by end of day Sunday, Nov 15:***

**POST on the Padlet:** Evidence of progress on your project, whatever you want that evidence to be! Your Unit will be due on Sunday Nov 29,so today, just post something you’re working on-- a picture of your comic, a page of what you’ve been writing, a minute of your video… whatever. *And feel free to leave Comments for each other.*

<https://padlet.com/dblain1/yi632swop4gjz2f1>

**Monday, Nov 16**

**10-11:40 class session.** Help for projects

***Due by end of day Wednesday, Nov 18:***

**WRITE:** Free free to leave more stuff on the Padlet wall: <https://padlet.com/dblain1/yi632swop4gjz2f1>

**Wednesday, Nov 20**

**10-11:40 class session.** All about The Artist’s Statement

***Due by end of day Sunday, Nov 22***

**WRITE:** Post your Work in Progress in the Google Drive folder (Unit 3) so we can share and celebrate on Monday, Nov 23. It doesn’t have to be perfect! And even if it’s just a link out to somewhere else, that’s fine!

**Monday, Nov 23**

**10-11:40 class session.** Share and celebrate

***Due by end of day Sunday, Nov 29***

**WRITE:** Post Unit 3 project AND Artist Statement into the Google Drive folder “Unit 3 – Writing in a New Genre.”

**Wednesday, Nov 25 – no class (Friday schedule) *and then Thanksgiving. Be sure to put all your Unit 3 materials into the Google Drive Folder by Sun 11/29***