

CREATING A MULTIMODAL TEXT

The Week of April 27th

THIS WEEK

Homework:

- Description of/ Outline/ Draft of your Multimodal Text Due Tuesday, May 5th

In Class Work:

- Read (your textbook) Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide to Writing: Issue 6
- Answer the following questions on the Discussion section of OpenLab: How do different genres speak to different audiences (provide an example). Do they serve the same purpose? Do they use the same rhetorical strategies (ethos, pathos, logos)? Does the author's voice or "identity" shift between the genres? Explain. Use a real example!

YOUR MULTIMODAL TEXT

STEP-BY-STEP

DESIGNING A MULTIMODAL TEXT

1. Choose a Genre or Medium to Match Purpose/ Audience
2. Think about your stance and your problem/ solution
3. Design the Text (font, color, white space, headings)
4. Embed Visuals/ Multimedia in the Text (charts, graphs, diagrams, photographs, maps, illustrations, etc)
5. Check for Rhetorical Appeals (ethos, pathos, logos)

CHOOSE A GENRE

Who is your audience?

- Are there design elements your audience expects/ needs? Large type? Illustrations? Are there design elements that might NOT appeal to them? Are there design elements that might make them question your authority as an author (ethos)?

CHOOSE A GENRE

What is your purpose?

- What design elements can help you achieve this purpose? If you are trying to explain HOW to do something, would it help to set off the steps in a numbered list? Is there anything that would work against your goals--using a playful font in a business letter for example?

GENRE/ MEDIUM IDEAS!

Blog

Poster

Brochure

Speech

Graphic Novel

Song/ Poem

TedTalk (must include transcript)

YouTube/ Tik Tok Video (must include transcript)

Photo/Video Essay (must include text transcript)

IN YOUR GENRE/ MEDIUM...

What are the Key Elements of the genre/ Medium you selected?

Meaning, what makes a blog a blog? How is a blog different than a 5 paragraph essay? What makes a speech different than a research paper?

EXAMPLE: BLOG

Blogs: Online sites where writers post reflections, ideas or arguments. They often contain images, embedded audio or video clips and links to other sites. They can cover a wide range of topics (politics, sports, cooking, etc). Almost always they allow readers to comment on the blog posts.

Here are two popular examples:

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/contributors/nate-silver/>

<https://smittenkitchen.com/>

COMMON GENRE ELEMENTS OF A BLOG

- Blog posts tend to be fairly short and to the point. They also tend to have a clear point/ purpose.
- Blogs tend to be written in an informal, conversational language.
- Many readers scan blogs, so they often use lists, headings, font and design elements to make scanning easy.
- They often include audio or video links.
- They often include hyperlinks to additional information.
- They often invite reader feedback to encourage commenting.
- They often have compelling titles.

EXAMPLE: PODCASTS (MUST INCLUDE TRANSCRIPT!)

Podcasts are audio programs that can explore issues, interview people or host talk shows.

Podcasts often include interviews, music, environmental sounds (like doors opening and closing or cars starting up), and sound effects.

Here is an example:

https://shortcut.thisamericanlife.org/#/clipping/701?_k=5rjah7

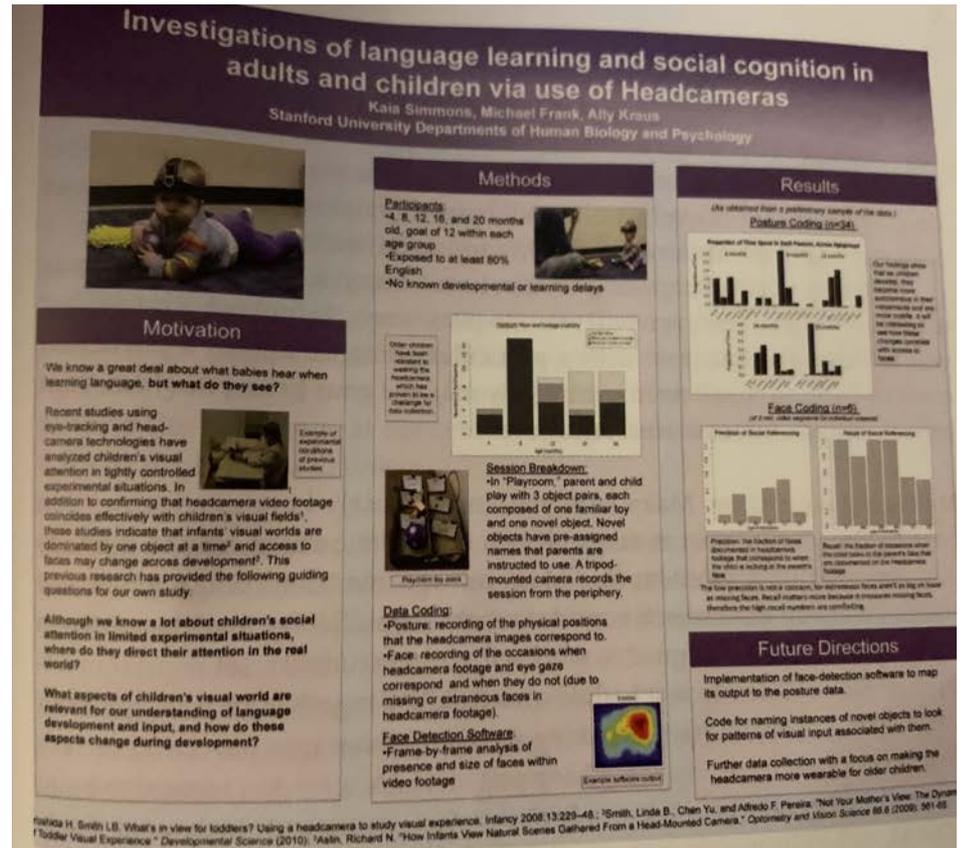
TIPS FOR COMPOSING A PODCAST

- Decide on Software to use (examples, audacity, garage band)
- Write out a script using everyday language and short sentences
- Introduce your sources at the beginning and paraphrase them rather than quote from them
- Use concrete examples and vivid images to help listeners see and imagine what you're describing. Use sound effects!
- Practice reading your script before recording! Vary your tone of voice and use other voices maybe for other people.
- Use music to establish a mood.

EXAMPLE: POSTER

Posters can be sophisticated, multimedia ways of communicating information.

Here is an example that includes 3 columns (motivation for the project, methods and results)



COMMON GENRE ELEMENTS OF A POSTER

- Present the information clearly and simply (people often read posters quickly!)
- Think hard about HOW to get the audience's attention (font, provocative question at the top, color, image)
- Keep the design simple (too much clutter makes it hard to read)
- Make sure the text is large enough to read and is organized in a way that is easy to quickly scan
- Choose colors that are easy to see and read (primary colors are easier to see than pastels, dark text is easier to see on a light background)

PLAN YOUR PROJECT: ACTIVITY

Stop now and map or create an outline for your project!

Write the following headings and fill them in:

Genre:

Audience:

Purpose:

The Problem/ Solution You Will Address:

INTRODUCE AND DEFINE THE PROBLEM: ACTIVITY

Introduce and define the problem you are addressing.

Explain why it is relevant and urgent to your target audience!

Write a few sentence description!

THINK ABOUT YOUR STANCE

What is YOUR stance on the topic? What are you trying to convince your audience to think or do? How do you want them to act?

FIND THE FACTS: ACTIVITY

What facts, statistics or information do YOU need to include in order to convince your audience to agree with you?

CHOOSE 3-4 Pieces of Evidence supported by Solid Reasons (facts, statistics, etc) that you will include in your multimodal text.

Try to paraphrase key information, summarize important statistics or data, include a very convincing quotation!

INCLUDE THE COUNTERARGUMENT: ACTIVITY

It is often important to include and refute the counterargument!

What is the counterargument? Include it! Refute it!

CALL THEM TO ACTION! ACTIVITY

How will you make your audience ACT?

What are you going to say, show them or do to make them act in the way you want them to?

Write a concluding Call-to-Action!

DESIGN THE TEXT: ACTIVITY

Now, it's time to plan for how to design your text!

1. Choose a Voice: Does your genre/medium or audience require a formal or an informal voice? What does that voice sound like? **Try writing a few sentences!**
2. Choose a font: What *font* or FONTS works best with your genre/ medium? **Choose a font or several fonts!** In general, texts that are composed in serif fonts (like Georgia, Times New Roman or Century) are easier on paper and texts composed in sans serif (like univers, helvetica, or verdana) are easier on screen. Script and handwrititng fonts are often very hard to read.

DESIGN THE TEXT: ACTIVITY

3. Using Colors: **Choose your colors!**

Colors can sometimes be necessary and expected and at other times can make a piece look unprofessional.

Be aware that colors can both spark strong emotional responses and can have strong cultural associations.

If using multiple colors, you must also consider how the colors work together. Primary colors create an effect of simplicity and directness.

Use colors to guide readers (ex: highlight important place)

DESIGN THE TEXT: ACTIVITY

4. **Adding Headings**: Headings help readers find important information. Keep headings short and make sure they are all parallel form (ex: “Energy Drinks” AND “Snack Food” OR “What’s In an Energy Drink?” AND “Why Are Snack Foods So Hard To Resist?”) **Outline your headings!**

5. **White Space**: White space is the open, blank space on a page. Chunking is when you break text into smaller units to make it more visibly appealing. Use white space to make texts more readable! **Design/ Sketch!**

EMBEDDING VISUALS AND MEDIA IN TEXT: ACTIVITY

- Examples of visuals and media are tables, graphs, charts, diagrams, photographs, maps, audio files, video files, etc,
- When embedding visuals and media in text, it is VERY important to introduce and discuss the item before revealing it. You can introduce the item as either Figure 1 or Table 1.
- CITE the sources!
- Choose the visuals or media you want to embed in your piece!

CHECK FOR RHETORICAL APPEALS

How are you appealing to your audience? Which rhetorical appeals do you use? **Make sure to include AT LEAST 1!**

Ethos: Appear credible (use credible sources, facts, statistics, etc)

Pathos: Appeal to a reader's emotions (use visuals or sensory images)

Logos: Appeal to a reader's logic (use logical reasoning, keep piece well-organized)

NOW, PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!

You have all of the pieces! Now, it's time to put them all together and make a dynamic multimodal piece!

As always, reach out with questions!