Literacy narrative for NYCCT 1101

Final Draft—6-4-2005

James Wu

**What is writing?**

Readings

Frederick Douglass, Excerpt from Autobiography of Frederick Douglass “Learning to Read and Write”

What is the value of reading and writing?

How does slavery dehumanize the so-called masters?

Do some additional research on Douglass.

Ernest Hemingway. 2 short stories about writing. “Now I Lay Me”; “I Guess Everything Reminds You of Something.”

What is Hemingway’s idea of writing? How does memory play a role in writing?

Try using his method in your reflection or in your literacy narrative

Camilo Jose Cela. Short excerpt from *Family of Pascual Duarte* p.82-86

Discussion questions to follow.

Keith Gilyard, Excerpt from Voices of the Self --

Have you encountered obstacles in your education?

Do you think Gilyard made bad choices?

Compare and contrast your experience to Gilyard’s.

**Student will write 4 short reflections on each reading and post to OpenLab. Student must comment on 1 other student post.**

**Write your own literacy narrative.** 1600-2000 words.

What do think is the relationship between reading and writing? What is your current writing practice, including text, email, social media, etc.? What goals do you have in becoming a better writer? What social, family, emotional, economic obstacles have you met in pursuing your education?

What has been your response to those obstacles?

* *Read and listen critically and analytically in a variety of genres and rhetorical situations.*
* *Use research as a process of inquiry and engagement with multiple perspectives.*
* *Demonstrate the social and ethical consequences of writing.*

Notes for PD.

James Wu’s comments on Gilyard: I’ve only read the excerpt here. I note that he was a Stuyvesant HS student, which I assume is the extremely elite public HS in NYC since …..a long time(?) I believe Thelonious Monk was a student there. I know a couple of people who graduated there, and they are impressive. My point---Gilyard was a high achieving student. Yes, he was “interrupted” by getting into drugs and crime. But he had to have had a strong foundation in traditional “academics.” So it’s not surprising to me he went on to be a professor and a writer.

For instance, to me, the excerpt we read is “standard written English.”

Not to say our students couldn’t do the same thing, or go on to be successful. But many of the students who have difficulty at City Tech do not have a strong “academic” foundation. We all know it’s easy to teach students who already have the “basics.”

Thus, we return to the same problem as from the beginning. How to engage the student who is not already motivated and “prepared” in a traditional academic sense.

James Wu’s comment on Cuny distance learning.

I hope everyone is doing well, or at least ok. Considerable stress on all including myself due to health crisis, economic uncertainty (Cuny budget, lost jobs, closed businesses etc), and political situation. People I know are getting sick. Some of my students have lost jobs, or parents have closed businesses; some students or parents are still going to work, in hospitals or as home health aides, in retail and food service. So everyone is under strain.

I’m using zoom and getting almost but not quite half of my students to participate. Also, using the blog on OpenLab and focusing on learning effective writing “design” in a blog post. This I basically mirror to paragraph breaks and I focus on clarity and precision in one’s actual statement of one’s thought. Then critical evaluation of one’s own thought and the question: do I actually affirm this thought? Metacognition gives the writer the opportunity to examine his own thought, after he has clearly stated it, and then if necessary, change it.

Zoom is useful and easy, and great for me to “lecture.” To counter this, I make the format to go around the table and have each participant give a personal update on health crisis and family; and questions on the research review. Students who participate it seem to appreciate having contact with me.

Distance learning takes “approximately” as much of my time as in person classes, minus the commute. However, I cannot really monitor who is “paying attention on zoom” and I cannot use in person communication techniques to stimulate discussion.

For office hours, I’ve used live blog sessions and I’m using Zoom. Also I am availiable on email and students have been in contact with me.

Main problem with blog. Not sure if students are really reading each other’s posts or even mine.

Nevertheless, I feel, subjectively, fwiw, that it’s working pretty well. Students seem to want to attend the Zooms. Though it’s not consistent—some are very busy.