

A Living Laboratory Activity Proposal

We are creating a cross-disciplinary collection of teaching activities that use the best practice approaches fostered in the “Living Lab”: adoption of City Tech’s General Education Student Learning Outcomes, George Kuh’s High Impact Educational Practices, place-based learning, open digital pedagogy (the OpenLab), and formal assessment methods.

Share your best practices with your colleagues! Use this form to record a favorite activity; an activity can be as small as an in-class exercise or as large as a semester-long project. Your description can be short or extensive – take as much space as you need.

Activity Title:	Beyond ‘Delicious’
Your Name:	Adrian Murcia
Department:	Hospitality Management
Course:	HMG 2305 – Dining Room Operations
Email:	amurcia@citytech.cuny.edu

Activity Description:

Provide a brief description of the activity.

In this supplementary, two-part (reading comprehension/writing) assignment, students will first select and assess in a blog post a favorite passage from several weeks’ worth of *New York Times* restaurant reviews (written memo responses to which are already handed in each week as part of a separate assignment)—specifically a passage in which the reviewer makes a particularly astute, funny, or clever observation about the food of the restaurant under review—and then, a week later, write a blog post describing a dish that they have encountered in their own lives that they have either loved or hated. Students will be required to post both parts of the activity as blog entries on OpenLab **and** present them informally in class on two successive weeks.

Learning Goals:

What do you aim to achieve with this activity?

The purpose of this activity is to get students to start thinking beyond ‘delicious’ or ‘amazing’ when it comes to writing about food, to get them to think more carefully and profoundly about the richness of descriptive language and the elegant power of persuasive writing, and apply that understanding in their own writing. This activity will be introduced as students are about to embark on their “Restaurant Service Analysis”—a six-page critique of their own restaurant experience and major component of their final grade in the course (20%). I want students not only to pay more attention to language—and the mechanics behind the art—but also, by connecting their own experiences to those of professional writers, to challenge and inspire them: to validate their own experiences as being worthy of original language, documentation, and public expression. I would also like to use this activity to build their technical ‘blogging’ skills.

Timing:

At what point in the lesson or semester to you use this activity? How much classroom time do you devote to it? How much out-of-class time is expected?

This will be assigned during week seven, well into students’ weekly *New York Times* response memos/critiques and a week before the Service Analysis assignment is handed out. Fifteen minutes of classroom time will be devoted to questions about the activity (which will have been posted on OpenLab); the following week (week eight), twenty to thirty minutes of classroom time will be devoted to students’ reading their favorite passages aloud; and the week after that

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(week nine), the same amount of time will be given to students' reading of their own work. Out-of-class time commitment should be no more than 3 hours.

Logistics:

What preparation is needed for this activity? What instructions do you give students?

Students will already be thinking about descriptive language during class discussions of *New York Times* reviews. Instructor will post on OpenLab quoted passages from archived *NYT* reviews and other food writing (to demonstrate good writing by way of example), a glossary of helpful literary terms (similie, methaphor, imagery, etc.), and a 'mechanics correction key' handout enumerating common writing errors (run-on sentences, comma splices, dangling modifiers, etc.).

Instructions will be posted online (see assignment sheet).

General Education SLOs:

Which of City Tech's [General Education Student Learning Outcomes](#) does this activity address?

1. Acquire writing tools for lifelong learning.
2. Communicate in diverse settings and groups, using written (both reading and writing) and oral means.
3. Derive meaning from experience, as well as gather information from observation.
4. Gather, interpret, and apply information about effective descriptive writing as related to food.

High Impact Educational Practices:

Which of [George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices](#) does this activity incorporate? Does it use the [OpenLab](#) for [open digital pedagogy](#)? Does it include [place-based learning](#)? Choose all that apply and/or add your own.

George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices:

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> First-year seminars and experiences | <input type="checkbox"/> Common intellectual experiences (core curriculum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning communities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing-intensive courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative assignments and projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and global learning ("difficult differences") | <input type="checkbox"/> Service- or community-based learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internships | <input type="checkbox"/> Capstone courses and projects |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open Digital Pedagogy (the OpenLab) | <input type="checkbox"/> Place-Based Learning |

Other (please describe):

Assessment:

How do you assess this activity? What assessment measures do you use? Do you include your evaluation in grade calculations?

The activity will be included among the checklist of components that make up students' final writing assignment, and therefore worth anywhere from two to three points. It will be assessed in two ways: first, I will make a quantitative assessment based on the college-wide writing rubric, the results of which I will share with students in private; and second, I will ask students to make a qualitative self-assessment of their own work and an assessment of the usefulness of the exercise.