

Would you buy the story?

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INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan is designed to fit an Intermediate Writing Workshop that I will be teaching in the spring of 2003 at Hopkins. The workshop is held in a writing lab that has an online computer for each student. Knowing that the technology will be available, I am structuring the first section of the unit to introduce the students to different ideas about technology in the classroom using a Hotlist (www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/listwebquestbe3.html) I constructed using Filamentality. We will then look at magazine articles they bring in to bring up ideas about expository writing that will be reinforced in the webquest. Following that, I will ask them to conduct a webquest on advertising (www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/webadvertisbe.html) through Filamentality and write a collaborative article incorporating three viewpoints for a fictitious magazine. The next day will be a one-hour in class essay as preparation for the standards tests. Each day will open with a fifteen-minute free writing exercise to introduce the students to journaling personal opinions based on given prompts. Discussions based on the journaling will be used to share ideas, review concepts and increase student interest. The final assessment will have students selecting ads from television, radio, print, or the Internet to analyze and respond to. The students will be asked to present their projects to the class as a means of improving oral presentation skills, springboard more discussion, and let the students know that they are not just going through the motions so that I alone may see the projects.

FREE WRITING PROMPTS

These are loosely placed in order to follow the progression of the unit. Prompts are subject to change if the discussions lead to a better thread or if class interest requires it.

1. What does the term “webquest” mean to you? If you have never heard the term before, write about what you imagine it could mean.
2. Write an entry beginning with the phrase: “I like/dislike computers because...”
3. How is a magazine article different from a short story or a novel?
4. What does the term “webquest” mean to you now that you have looked at the Hotlist? What is your opinion of webquesting?
5. Think of an advertisement you have seen or heard (TV, radio, print, etc.) Write about what you like or dislike in this ad.
6. Why do YOU think companies spend so much money on advertising?
7. What is your opinion on using technology in the classroom? Offer reasons to support your position.
8. Does advertising work on you? Explain why you feel it does or does not.

9. In your opinion, what is more important in advertising, promoting the product/service being sold or attracting the consumer's attention? Why?
10. Why do you think it is wrong or right to use a consumer's emotions in selling a product or service?

WOULD YOU PLUG YOURSELF IN? (2 days)

To open this section, have the students write on prompt #1. After fifteen to twenty minutes, ask the students to share what they have written. Lead into a discussion concerning technology in the classroom. Ask for students' opinions, previous knowledge and experiences, and what tech tools they are familiar with. Explain what a Hotlist is and have them complete the "Would you plug yourself in?" question sheet (see attachment 1) using the Hotlist at www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/listwebquestbe3.html (see attachment 2). Students may discuss in pairs, but each student must turn their own responses in. Discuss findings and implications. Ask students to bring in a magazine of their choice for class on day 3. Concepts and Vocabulary Technology in the Classroom Webquest Hypertext Multi-media

WHAT'S THE STORY? (2 days)

To start this section, have the students write on prompt #3. Share and discuss responses. Outline what defines journalistic writing and compare to other genres. Ask students to get out their magazines or choose one from those provided. Have them select one article out of the magazine and read it. Then have them get into groups of three. Have them complete the "What's the Story?" questions as an interview (see attachment 3). One student asks the questions while the second records the third's answers. They will rotate roles until everyone has been interviewed. Discuss findings and implications. Concepts and Vocabulary Expository Writing Main Idea & Supporting Information Perspective Worldview Where is the story in an article?

WHO'S BUYING? (5-6 days)

To start this section, have students write on prompt #5. Share and discuss responses. Talk about perspective, ad scheme, target audience, and student opinions on advertising. Show "Merchants of Cool." Discuss student reactions and societal implications. Introduce the "Who's Buying?" webquest (located at www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/webadvertisbe.html, see attachment 4) and have them return to their groups of three from "Where's the Story?" and complete the webquest. Have the students share their articles with the class. Concepts and Vocabulary Perspective Product Ad Scheme Target Audience Hidden Agenda & Motives Advocate Propaganda

IN-CLASS ASSESSMENT

No free writing on this day. In preparation for the timed writing on the standards tests, students will be given one hour to write an essay in class. They will choose an advertisement from a magazine. Ask them to keep their magazines from earlier in the unit if possible. The instructions will read as follows: Select an advertisement from a magazine. Look at the ad and think about what you already knew and what we have learned about advertising. Write an essay of at least one page answering the following questions using examples from the ad and magazine to support your assertions:

1. What is being sold in the advertisement?
2. How is the advertisement selling what is being sold?

3. Who is the advertisement selling to?
4. How are the product, the ad scheme, and the target audience related?

This assessment, out of twenty points, will be graded on these items:

Two points will be awarded for each question answered.

One point will be awarded for supporting the answer.

And two points will be awarded for each of the following: introduction, conclusion, comprehensive flow, and grammar usage.

This assessment is designed to prepare the students for high stakes testing practices without using high stakes grading. For the most part this is to get them used to sitting down, staring at a blank sheet and formulating arguments on the fly.

ARE YOU READY?

To start this section, have students write on prompt #9 or prompt #10. Share and discuss responses. Have the students think about what they have been learning in the three previous sections. Ask for opinions, points of interest and questions to get them thinking. Explain the piece they will be creating. Students select an advertisement from television, print, radio or the Internet. After determining the product, scheme and target audience of the ad, the student will be asked to create a response piece based on these elements. They may choose from:

1. a criticism of the ad
2. a short story or poem based on the ad
3. a 'counter' ad
4. a letter to the creator of the ad
5. an in depth deconstruction of the ad
6. a comparison of two ads
7. creating an ad campaign for a fictitious product, determining the scheme, and target audience to be blatantly emphasized
8. or any other idea for which they get approval

The students will be asked to present their projects to the class and relate their product to the original ad using concepts and vocabulary from the previous sections. They will be graded according to a rubric given to them at the start of the project. (see attachment 5).