CLRC Writing Skills Workshop: Assignment Analysis

Presenters:
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Student Learning Outcomes

After attending this workshop, students should be able to do the following:

- Identify elements of a writing assignment.
- Identify the verbs and nouns in an assignment in order to uncover the critical thinking activities and forms of writing embedded in the assignment.
- Identify several prewriting strategies, including clustering, outlining, brainstorming, and list making.
Brainstorm current questions

- What brought you here today?
- On what writing assignments are you currently working? For which classes?
- What do you find most challenging when approaching a new writing assignment?
Part I: Format of the Assignment

- Technical and structural requirements:
  - Font size, margins, headers
  - Length or word count
  - Rubric or grading guidelines
  - Citation format
  - Due date or multiple draft deadlines

- Describes the function or focus:
  - Audience or voice (formal or informal)
  - Thesis or theme driven
  - Subjective (opinion) or objective (information)
  - Response to course texts or research
  - Connection to course
Activity

- Use your own assignment or a sample provided.
- Work in groups of four and complete the following:
  - Read and identify the elements of the assignment listed on Part I of the Assignment Analysis handout.
  - Write what you find in the Current Assignment Information column.
  - Note what information is missing or what questions you still have about the assignment.
Part II: Content of the Assignment

- Nouns: people, place, thing, idea
- Verbs: action or state of being
- What can nouns and verbs say about requirements for an assignment?
- Bloom’s Taxonomy and levels of thinking
Activity

Continue in your groups with the same assignment:

- **Underline** the verbs in the assignment: such as *define, describe, analyze, design.*
- **Circle** the nouns in the assignment: such as *essay, critique, research paper, analysis.*
- On the handout, identify the verbs you found. Which thinking level(s) does the assignment require?
- Write the nouns from the assignment in the table. What form should your thinking take?
Next steps: Pre-writing Strategies

- After you have a better idea about what the assignment is asking you to do, generate some ideas about your topic.
- Review the Pre-writing Strategies handout for suggestions.
- Meet with a tutor to explore which possibilities fit the assignment.
- Ask for the Pre-writing DLA when you visit the Writing Center.
Conclusion

- Why is this important to your academic success and critical thinking?
- What did you learn? What do you still wonder?
Upcoming CLRC Workshops

- All here in the CLRC, Thursdays, 1 – 1:50 PM
- Learning Skills
  - Time Management – Sept. 18
  - Overcoming Procrastination – Oct. 2
  - Test Taking Skills – Oct. 16
  - Learning Styles – Oct. 30
  - Math Confidence – Nov. 13
  - Stress Management – Dec. 4

- Writing Skills
  - MLA and APA Citation – Sept. 25 & Nov. 20
  - Self-Editing Strategies – Oct. 23
Thank you

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