CLRC Writing Skills Workshop

Getting Started:

OR

How to Read Your Professor’s Mind

Presenter:

Michelle Detorie, Writing Center LTA
HOW TO READ YOUR PROFESSOR’S MIND?

[Image of brain with lightning bolts and a person pointing to it, accompanied by a fortune-teller holding a crystal ball.]
Understanding any type of assignment so you can get started on the right track

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- Practice strategies for reading assignments carefully and purposefully
- Understand the elements of a writing assignment.
- Identify the types of thinking and writing required by the assignment.
What happens when you don’t understand an assignment?
What do you usually do in order to understand assignments?

What helps you understand your assignments?

What resources help?
Strategies for Assignment Analysis

Asking questions to identify the parts or elements of an assignment.
Elements of an Assignment:
What do you need to know to get started?

Purpose: What will the assignment accomplish?

Audience: Who are you addressing?

Style/Format: What will the paper look like?
Elements of an Assignment: What do you need to know to get started?

**Purpose:** What will the assignment accomplish?

- Is there a particular skill, ability, or knowledge I am expected to demonstrate?
- Should my approach be subjective or objective?
- Is my task to argue a point or simply relay information (thesis-driven or descriptive)?
- Do I need to do research?
Elements of an Assignment: What do you need to know to get started?

**Audience:** Who are you addressing?
- What can I assume the reader knows?
- How much summary should I give?
- Which terms need definition?
- What kind of language should I use (formal/informal, specialized jargon, etc)?
Elements of an Assignment: What do you need to know to get started?

**Style/Format:** What will it look like?
- Are there guidelines for the format?
- How long does it need to be?
- What formatting or style guidelines should I follow (MLA or APA)?
Activity I

Use your own assignment or a sample provided:

- Read the assignment carefully and identify the elements of the assignment.
- Write answers in spaces provided.
- Note any missing information.
Understanding the Assignment: Look at the words in the assignment carefully.

*Verbs*: can tell you the ACTION to take and, thus, what kind of thinking and writing are required.

*Nouns*: can tell you WHAT TO USE (specific texts or resources) and WHAT TO PRODUCE (the type of paper).

- **Describe**
  - Textbook
- **Tell**
  - Library research
- **Explain**
  - Short story
- **Apply**
  - Journal entry
- **Compare**
  - Summary
- **Examine**
  - Argument
- **Argue**
  - Portfolio
Activity II

- Use your own assignment or a sample provided:
  - Circle the **actions** and underline the people, places, or things in the assignment, then define each.
Exploring other Resources

- Additional notes
- The syllabus
- Grading Rubric
- Models
- Instructor
- Other Students
- Tutors
- The class
- The discipline
Reflection: What did you learn?

- Which strategies worked best for you?
- How will you use these in upcoming assignments?

Remember:

*Writing Center tutors can help you with assignment analysis, brainstorming, and organizing your ideas.*

*Mon-Thurs 9-7 and Fri 9-3*

*Make an appointment today!*
Upcoming CLRC Workshops
Wednesdays & Thursdays, 1 – 2 PM

- **Writing Skills Workshops**
  - Writing Anxiety—Thursday, February 20\(^{th}\)
  - YOUR Writing Process—Thursday, March 6\(^{th}\)
  - Revising Strategies—Thursday, March 20\(^{th}\)
  - Exploring Poetry – Wednesday, April 9\(^{th}\)
  - Essentials of Research—Thursday, April 10\(^{th}\)
  - Introduction to Citation—Wednesday, April 23\(^{rd}\)
  - MLA Citation—Wednesday, May 7\(^{th}\)
  - APA Citation—Thursday, May 8\(^{th}\)

- **Learning Skills Workshops**
  
  http://www.sbcc.edu/clrc/workshops.php
Thank you

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