

Appendix 2

The Digital Writing Workshop Study Guide

Chapter 1: Imagining a Digital Writing Workshop

- As you reflect on your experience teaching writing, what core principles do you value and enact in your classroom? Time for writing? Conferring with student writers? How have those practices remained constant over time?
- As you consider newer literacies and technologies that your students engage in outside of school, what effects do you feel they have on their academic literacies? For instance, do you feel that instant messaging is having a negative effect on student's grammar and spelling? In what ways do your opinions and your students' behaviors reflect what Knobel and Lankshear define as the two mind-sets, one more traditional and one that embraces new literacies?
- How do you hear the terms *digital* or *electronic* used in everyday conversation in your classroom and school? In the news? With your family and friends? What connotations do these terms carry, positive and negative? How do those connotations affect our response to using these technologies in our classroom?
- Given your own experience using technology for writing traditional and multimodal texts such as the PSAs students in Aram Kabodian's class were composing, what do you already know about "good" writing? What are the qualities of writing that make it good? How does this definition of good vary by purpose and audience for the work?

- Considering your own comfort level with teaching in a writing workshop and familiarity with a variety of technologies including word processors, digital audio and video editors, and online writing spaces such as blogs and wikis, what are some of the challenges you anticipate in trying to blend the principles of the writing workshop with these technologies?

Chapter 2: Fostering Choice and Inquiry Through RSS, Social Bookmarking, and Blogging

- Fostering student choice in genre and topic has been a hallmark of writing workshop instruction for years. What opportunities and challenges face you when you offer students choices? What curricular constraints are you under that may limit choices? In what ways can students have choices within limits and how can access to RSS readers, social bookmarking, and blogging inform those choices?
- When using an RSS reader, the information is inherently screened to some degree. What advantages and disadvantages does this offer your students as readers and researchers? In what ways might you encourage them to populate their RSS feeds with different kinds of information sources?
- Social bookmarking relies on the idea that people will share resources that are pertinent to others with whom they are networked. How does this filtering process affect the quality of the sites shared—for better or for worse? In what ways is using a social network better than simply looking for information through a search engine? In what ways could relying on social bookmarking be detrimental?
- Blogs offer opportunities for writers to share and categorize their work with tags as well as for readers to leave comments. In what ways will students have to frame their work so that they get the kinds of responses that they want? In what ways will students have to respond so as to give generative feedback and not simply offer the equivalent of a “good job” to their peers?

Chapter 3: Conferring Through Blogs, Wikis, and Collaborative Word Processors

- When you think about the process of conferring with student writers, what challenges do you face related to time, the kinds of responses you feel you can and should give, and helping students confer with one another?
- Blogs and wikis have been around for a number of years now, yet still carry certain connotations. What do you think of when you hear the term *blog*? *Wiki*? In what ways do these connotations affect our perceptions of these technologies as potential tools in the classroom?
- While the potential appeal for using technologies such as blogs, wikis, and collaborative word processors may entice students, what are some of the challenges that you may face—both in terms of access to the technology and teaching students how to respond appropriately to one another—that may be magnified by using these digital writing tools?
- Digital writing tools offer us unprecedented ability to confer with our students and offer very specific comments and feedback. How will you structure your own process of response so that you focus first on the writer, then on the writing, all the while using the features of the technology most effectively? For instance, how and when can you best use the comment feature on a blog post as compared to tracking changes in a collaborative word-processing document?

Chapter 4: Examining Author's Craft Through Multimedia Composition

- When we think of author's craft, what are the elements of writing that are most important to you? Leads? Elements of characterization? Dialogue? Conclusions? How do these elements translate into digital writing that is sometimes not print-based?
- How can the MAPS heuristic help you define the writing task for students as well as begin to think about assessment of the multimedia work that they will produce?

- For each of the three types of multimedia writing discussed in this chapter—photo essays, podcasts, and digital videos—what considerations would be most important in helping students craft a quality piece of digital writing? How do traditional categories we use to assess writing such as ideas, organization, or voice emerge in these pieces?
- In what ways can the distribution of these types of digital writing play into the academic purposes you have for assigning them as well as the motivations students have for creating them? What audiences and formats can you imagine for different kinds of assignments using these types of media?
- In looking at the examples of assignments from Reed and Murchie, what commonalities do you see in their pedagogical approach as well as their assessments?

Chapter 5: Designing and Publishing Digital Writing

- What publication rituals do you value in your own writing workshop? Public performances of writing? Anthologies of student work? Distribution to other media outlets such as fan fiction websites or newspaper editorial pages? In what ways can what you do already for publication be enhanced by the digital writing tools discussed in this chapter?
- Visit Helen Barrett’s website on electronic portfolios and look at her categories of tools (electronicportfolios.org/categories.html). Besides blogs, what other tools might you consider using to have students create digital portfolios? Why would you choose one tool over another?
- As students create and share their writing via a wiki anthology, what other tasks could you imagine developing from that process? For instance, how might peer response groups develop? In what ways might outside audiences be able to contribute comments or offer revisions to student work?
- In creating audio anthologies for CD, also consider setting up a regular podcast for your classroom. In what ways might producing a weekly or monthly podcast featuring writers sharing their work (as compared to only creating a CD at the end) complement the types of publication and response that you are aiming for in your writing workshop?

Chapter 6: Enabling Assessment over Time with Digital Writing Tools

- What do you believe are the purposes of formative and summative assessment? In what ways do the digital tools outlined in the previous chapters offer you opportunities for these different kinds of assessment?
- In reviewing Figure 6.1, what additional lessons will you need to craft in order to meet the needs of your writers as they compose digital texts? Just as each bullet point in Burke’s list can be turned into a minilesson and be considered a part of summative assessment, what other knowledge and skills related to digital writing will you need to gain in order to successfully teach about copyright, file management, file format, and distribution of digital texts?
- In reviewing Figure 6.2, what traits do you typically value in terms of student writing? To what degree does one trait outweigh others in your vision of assessment? How does that vision of assessment change with digital writing tasks?
- Examine Allison’s “Be a Blogger” matrix (Figure 6.3). What is he asking his writers to do? In what ways do these tasks that blogging requires connect to the types of skills and dispositions outlined in the reports and curriculum documents about twenty-first-century skills mentioned in Chapter 4? In what ways does blogging help students become digitally literate?

Chapter 7: Creating Your Digital Writing Workshop

- Mishra and Koehler’s idea of “Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge” centers on the idea that effectively using technology in the classroom requires deep understanding of the content, the pedagogy, and the technology in order to make informed choices for student learning. What do you consider the “content” of a writing curriculum in the twenty-first century? How is it similar to and different from writing curricula in the past? How do specific technologies and pedagogical practices associated with those technologies affect the “content” of a writing classroom?

- How would you characterize your students' skills with technology as compared to their savvy related to Internet safety, privacy, and creative uses of those technologies? In what ways can we, as teachers who know and understand the writing process, contribute to their understanding of how to compose in digital spaces?
- Given the three elements of the framework in this chapter—your students, the subject of writing, and the spaces in which we write—how would you describe these elements as they are currently present in your classroom and school? What do you already have in place to begin your digital writing workshop? What else do you need to develop in order to make your digital writing workshop successful?

Appendix: Sample Lessons: Exploring Copyright Through Collaborative Wiki Writing

- Before exploring the resources on fair use and Creative Commons, write down or discuss your understanding of copyright law in general and, in particular, how it relates to educational use of materials. What are some of the “norms” that you understand about copyright (such as how long a clip of music can be or how long you can hold on to a videotaped episode of a TV show)?
- Visit the Media Education Lab’s website (mediaeducationlab.com/) and view some of the resources available, in particular the page with resources related to the Code for Best Practices for Fair Use in Media Education (mediaeducationlab.com/sites/mediaeducationlab.com/files/CodeofBestPracticesinFairUse.pdf). How does this change your perception of fair use?
- What are your understandings of how a wiki works, both from a technical and a social standpoint? When someone mentions Wikipedia, for example, what is your initial reaction? How does that reaction influence your perceptions of wikis as a tool you can use for teaching writing?
- As students work to develop their projects, what are some of the questions that you think they will develop? What recent news stories about copyright might you be able to cite as examples for them to use?