

ASSIGNMENT #1: PERSONAL ASSET ESSAY



XKCD by Randal Munroe, <http://xkcd.com/208/>

IN THIS COMIC, SOMEONE IMAGINES SAVING THE DAY WITH A NEW COMPUTER PROGRAMMING SKILL THEY HAVE LEARNED.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW HOW TO DO? WHAT DO YOU DO WELL? WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO?
WHAT SKILLS DO YOU BRING TO THIS COLLEGE WRITING CLASS? WHAT WRITING SKILLS? WHAT LANGUAGE SKILLS?

THESE SKILLS CAN SAVE THE DAY IF YOU KNOW HOW TO MOBILIZE THEM!

ASSIGNMENT #1:

COMPONENTS:

- ASSET INVENTORY SURVEY, COMPILED IN CLASS AS A GROUP
- COMPLETED ASSET SURVEY, FILLED OUT BY YOU
- 3-5 PAGE ESSAY, 12 POINT FONT, DOUBLE SPACED, STANDARD MARGINS
- 1 PAGE WRITER'S MEMO

RELEVANT COURSE AUTHORS:

- PATRICIA DUNN
- JOHN KRETZMANN
- SARAH VOWELL
- GENEVA SMITHERMAN
- AMY TAN

ASSETS!

What is an **asset**? Usually, when people use the word “asset” they mean financial assets (money) but the word can have a broader definition. Everybody has personal assets—they possess skills, knowledges, capacities, and resources that they bring with them wherever they go. Assets can be mobilized—they can be used to help you out in various situations.

We will be designing a **capacity inventory survey** in-class to get you thinking about all the skills people might be bringing with them into this course.

Then, you will fill out this survey for yourself to compile a concrete list of the skills you have to draw on as a student, that I can draw on as your teacher, and that we can all rely on as fellow members of our classroom community.

Finally, you will choose one of your own personal assets and write an essay about it. This essay should:

- Define and explain the asset you have chosen
- Discuss this asset in the context of your own life (in your past, present, future, or all three)
- Explain *why* this particular skill is an asset. How does it help you? How do you use it?

This should be done in a 3-5 page essay. Your audience is fellow classmates, and this essay will be shared with the class in order to complete Assignment #3, in which we will be mapping our classroom's assets in order to design the final project for this class.

ASSIGNMENT #2: GENRE PORTFOLIO



HOME VIDEO SPORTS RADIO ELECTION 08 BUSINESS OUR DUMB WORLD HIST

SEARCH

AV AT THE AV C

Thousands Gather For Stuffing Of Giant Rockefeller Center Turkey



09:45PM ET | NEW YORK

"Lines were long but I wanted my son to be there when they peeled back the skin and threw salted butter and grease into the crowd," said Dean Carlson [MORE](#)

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Attractive Girls Union Refuses To Enter Into Talks With Mike Greenman

At a press conference today, the AGU announced it will not even acknowledge Mike Greenman until he begins dressing better and loses some weight.



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IN BRIEF

HAVE YOU EVER READ THE ONION?

IT IS A PARODY NEWSPAPER. BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT? WHAT MAKES SOMETHING A PARODY?

A PARODY IMITATES THE GENRE CONVENTIONS OF ITS SUBJECT. WHAT DOES THE ONION HAVE IN COMMON WITH A REAL NEWSPAPER?

GENRES ARE ALL AROUND US. HOW DO YOU USE GENRE IN YOUR WRITING?

ASSIGNMENT #2

GENRE PORTFOLIO

- COMPONENTS:
- EXAMPLES OF 3 DIFFERENT GENRES
- 3 SHORT CRITICAL RESPONSES TO THESE EXAMPLES (1-3 PAGES) IN 3 DIFFERENT GENRES
- INTRODUCTORY MEMO IDENTIFYING EACH GENRE, YOUR AUDIENCE FOR EACH CRITICAL PIECE, AND YOUR CHOICES AS A WRITER

RELEVANT COURSE AUTHORS:

- ROSEMARIE GARLAND THOMPSON
- HORACE MINER
- ROBERT SCHOLES
- SCOTT MCLOUD
- JOHN PETERS

GENRES!

What is a genre? I am sure you can name many different *examples* of genres, but what is it really?

A **genre** is a set of criteria for writing or composing. These criteria are called “conventions”.

We will be practicing our critical inquiry skills in this unit by creating **genre portfolios**. For your portfolio, you will be identifying an example of three different genres. Then, you will write a critical response to each piece you choose, in three different genres. Your portfolio will also contain an introductory memo explaining your choices as a writer, the audience for each of your responses, and your critical strategies.

Some examples of critical genres you might choose to write in for this portfolio include:

- Review
- Blog entry
- Opinion
- Satire
- Letter to the editor
- Parody
- Personal reflection
- Comparison
- History
- Or any other genre you like, with my approval, including multimedia genres, as well as something that combines or overlaps multiple genres.

Each of your responses should be 1-3 pages in length (minimum 1 **full** page) (or the equivalent if you are writing in a digital or multimedia genre).

Your final portfolio may be turned in digitally or on paper. I must have access to the texts you are critiquing, so please plan to make them available. (I can work with you to arrange for this.) Appropriate formatting guidelines will be distributed to the class in a memo closer to the due date of the project.

ASSIGNMENT #3

ASSET MAP AND ASSIGNMENT DESIGN

COMPONENTS:

- ASSET MAP OF OUR CLASSROOM AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE, COMPLETED IN GROUPS OF 5
- ASSIGNMENT DESIGN FOR FINAL PROJECT, COMPLETED IN GROUP
- BRIEF PERSONAL REFLECTION

RELEVANT COURSE AUTHORS:

SYLVIA SCRIBNER

JOHN KRETZMANN

WEI ZHU

DEBORAH TANNEN

ASSIGNMENT #1 (BY...US)

MAPPING!

This assignment is about building connections, and organizing knowledge. We will be creating asset maps that relate each student's individual assets to each other's (your teachers' as well) and the greater community (be it MSU, Lansing, the world, the internet, or something else...)

We will be building off of work you did in the first two units. Each student will have access to every other student's asset inventory, and asset essay. You will need to read these essays to complete this project, as well as have access to the data from our capacity inventory survey.

Your goal is to **locate literacy** within the assets of our classroom. What assets can be seen as forms of literacy? What kinds of literacy does our class have?

The first task of the assignment is to create, in groups of 4-5 students, a map of our class's assets. You may choose your own medium for this map (paper, website, digital document, something else...). It should

- Represent the skills and capacities we all have, showing what things people have in common as well as where differences exist
- Build connections between our individual and shared classroom assets and the world outside our classroom: communities, resources, disciplines
- Connect our literacies to disciplinary literacies at the university
- Choose an interested audience and accurately represent our class to them

Next, based on what you have discovered through making this map, you will design an assignment for our class's final project. **We will be doing these assignments!** For assignment #5, you will have the opportunity to choose from the assignments generated through this project. You should design an assignment that:

- Relates to our course's shared learning outcomes
- Mobilizes assets present in our classroom
- Connects to resources outside of our classroom
- Excites you! Design something that you would be interested in writing/creating and proud to turn in as your final project.

Finally, you will write a brief (2-3) page personal statement about your experience with this project and your role in the group.

An excerpt from *Making Comics* by Scott McCloud (which you will be reading):



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WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WRITING AN ESSAY AND COMPOSING IN A DIFFERENT GENRE?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CHANGE SOMETHING INTO A DIFFERENT GENRE FOR A DIFFERENT AUDIENCE?

WHAT GENRES DO YOU COMPOSE IN EVERY DAY OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL?

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ASSIGNMENT #4:

COMPOSING AS WRITING

COMPONENTS:

- SHORT PROPOSAL, CHOOSING A PREVIOUS WRITING ASSIGNMENT, IDENTIFYING ITS PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE
- ONE NEW CREATION, FULFILLING THAT SAME PURPOSE FOR THAT SAME AUDIENCE IN A DIFFERENT MEDIUM
- 1-PAGE WRITER'S MEMO

RELEVANT COURSE AUTHORS:

SCOTT MCCLLOUD

ELIZABETH HILL BOONE

DENNIS BARON

Your assignment in this unit is to think about how composing in different media is a form of writing, and to explore the process of communicating to a familiar audience in an unfamiliar **mode**.

You must first choose a piece of writing you have done previously in this course, and identify the purpose and audience of this piece. Then, in a 1-page proposal, you must outline how you can compose in a different medium or form to fulfill the same purpose as this previous writing.

Then, you will do what you proposed to do! Appropriate media include video, comic book/sequential art, sound, performance, website, or game. A PowerPoint presentation that turns your paragraphs into bullet points is **NOT ACCEPTIBLE**.

We will be having a **project fair** in class during our lab for you to share projects with each other. Any performative pieces will be shared with the class at this time, and there will be opportunities for students to display their projects for the whole class.

You will also write a 1-page writer's memo describing your intentions with the piece, evaluating your success using this medium, and reflecting on your experience.