

# TWO CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT EXPERIMENTS

Fall, 2003

Art 100—Art Appreciation  
A study of techniques for reading comprehension  
Lisa Tessier, Instructor

English 006—The Reading-Writing Connection  
How the knowledge of learning styles affects progress in writing  
Evelyn Farbman, Professor



# ART 100 Pre-Semester Survey

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

3. My goals/expectations for this course are...

4. To me art is...

5. Do you have an interest in the art of a specific culture or time period? Yes No

If yes, what culture(s)/periods are you interested in? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often do you read assigned readings from your textbook?

Never Sometimes Usually Always

What encourages or motivates you to read the textbook?

What is the biggest reason why you don't read an assigned reading?

7. What do you think would help you remember things that you have read?

8. How do you think you learn best?

Reading Lecture Discussions Homework Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please circle ALL of the office hours that you COULD attend if you needed help.

Mon. 2:45-3:45 PM	Tues. 9:30-10:30AM	Wed. 9:30-10:00AM	Thurs. 9:30-10:30AM
	or 2:45-3:45PM	or 2:45-3:45 PM	

10. Do you have any questions at this point in time?

## Reading Assignments:

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This semester I will be researching what techniques are most effective at improving reading comprehension and retention. I will be analyzing your quiz and test results to see if there is any correlation between questions that you did well/ poorly on, and particular types of reading assignments. I will also ask you to complete a brief survey twice during the semester.

Your name will not be connected with any specific research finding; however, I may like to use your name when thanking the whole class for participating. You are encouraged to participate in this project. If for some reason you do not want to participate in this research project, please let me know as soon as possible.

Regardless if you participate in the study or not, you must complete 8 Reading Assignments as indicated below. See the Course Schedule for due dates.

### **Standards for Assignments:**

- All assignments must be turned in on time for full credit.
- Assignments may be typed or *neatly* hand-written.
- Thoroughness, organization, correct spelling/grammar, and creativity will be rewarded.
- Use these assignments as an opportunity to learn material, participate (ask questions and find answers), and improve your writing skills.

**Feedback and Grades** will consist of written comments, and a mark. The combined worth of all reading assignments will equal 15% of your final grade.

### **Reflection Assignments:**

Reflection assignments are written responses to a question posed by the professor. They should consist of one to three paragraph responses. Reflections allow you to organize, develop and share your personal thoughts on a subject.

*The following Reflections are due:*

- Prehistoric and Ancient Near East Art  
What kind of words would you use to describe Prehistoric Art and art from the Ancient Near East? Are there any generalizations you can make about this early art?
- Baroque Art  
Pretend you are a patron living in the Baroque period and examine the work by Caravaggio. Write a letter to him that either admires his style and suggests that you want to buy one of his works, OR criticizes his work.

### **Outline Assignments:**

Outlines reveal the organization and structure of a chapter. They are particularly helpful for allowing you to explore relationships among main points and understanding the hierarchy of ideas in a chapter. Your outline should consist of the major headings in the chapter and two or three key points found in the text under each heading. (Warning: Outlining may take more time than some of the other assignments, so plan ahead)

*The following Outlines are due:*

- Etruscan and Roman Art
- African Art

Here's a sample example

- I. The Emergence of Greek Civilization
  - Believed in human superiority, especially Greek humans...
  - Poor farmland, needed dependency on trade
  - Scope included: mainland Greece (Peloponnese and Macedonia), Aegean Islands, W. Asia Minor (Turkey), and colonies
  - Art: seeking perfection; experimentation and change, realism
  - Democracy
- A. A Brief History
  1. 1100BCE Mycenaean collapse→confusion, immigrants
  2. 900 BCE small communities speaking same language, "Greeks"
  3. 800-700 BCE polis-independent city-states emerge
    - a. examples: Corinth, Athens, Sparta
    - b. 594 BCE Athens begins democracy and equal rights for men
  4. etc. etc.
- B. Religious Beliefs and Sacred Places

### **Question Assignments:**

I have created a list of three questions. Each question should be answered with one to three sentences. Questions require that you think about important chapter topics and create concise answers.

*The following Question Assignments are due:*

- Islamic Art
  - Why is non-figural, or aniconic, art favored by Islamic artists?
  - What is a mosque and what are some key parts of a mosque?
  - What is calligraphy?
- 19<sup>th</sup> Century Art
  - What were the goals of the Impressionists and why were their works so radical/controversial at the time?
  - Name two key Post-Impressionists and describe the styles they influenced.
  - What technological inventions were made during this century that affected the arts?

### Group Discussion Assignments:

For Group Discussions, you will be assigned to a team of four to six people to be chapter reading leaders for two different days. As a team, you are required to develop three questions that we will then discuss in class. The questions should be centered on something that you think is very interesting or critical in the chapter. The questions should also promote and engage discussion in the class. You must turn in a written copy of the three questions. Group discussions allow you the unique opportunity to get to know your peers!

*You will participate in the following Group Discussions:*

- Gothic Art
- Indigenous American Art

The above assignments were randomly assigned to chapters. **For the chapters without specific assignments, you are still accountable for reading!** There may be surprise quizzes or in-class discussions to make sure you are doing your reading.

\* \* \*

*The experiment was intended to be repeated over two semesters before findings were calculated, but this adjunct instructor left the College before she was able to follow through. Her comments in retrospect: "What I did was keep track of who turned in particular assignments (most actually did do the assignments), and then sorted exam/quiz questions into two types: units which had assignments and those which did not have assignments. For each student, I kept track of how he/she did throughout the semester for the assignment versus non-assignment questions. . . (it's important to know that I never simply re-asked the same assignment question on an exam--but the idea was that they had done the reading for that unit and had processed it to aid their comprehension and/or memory). . I had planned to then add other types of reading comprehension methods and see if certain methods were more effective than others."*

## REPORT ON EXPERIMENT IN ENGLISH 006

Fall, 2003

combining results from 2001-2002 Assessments of  
Learning Styles and Writing

### Purpose of experiment

Learning Styles investigation has revealed that our students tend to be *concrete*, *sequential*, *active*, and *visual* learners. Writing pedagogy tends toward instruction to the opposite learning styles: *abstract*, *global*, *reflective*, and *verbal*. Meanwhile, assessment data reveals that the writing of our students is burdened by weaknesses in *development of ideas* and *use of language*.

The purpose of the experiment in English 006 was to focus on the key areas of writing weakness while experimenting with pedagogy that balances learning styles. The emphasis was on balancing *global & sequential learning* in the written *development of ideas* and on balancing *abstract & concrete* in the *correct use of language*.

### Description of method

The project included four sections of English 006: 2 experimental pilot sections and 2 control sections. Teachers in the experimental sections agreed on common activities and methods for balancing learning styles while addressing the key areas of writing weakness. Teachers in the control sections taught in their accustomed ways.

All 4 sections embedded an entry and exit writing sample to measure progress. Students in all sections responded to the same topic and were given the same amount of writing time. Entry and exit samples were stapled together to allow comparison. After teachers recorded grades for the writing samples in whatever way was appropriate for their classes, names were removed from the samples, leaving only Banner numbers when the samples were submitted for the scoring pool. Samples were coded on the back as belonging to either the experimental or control section.

In February, seven papers will be selected from each of the four sections. These will be shuffled and scored holistically and analytically according to the CCC Writing Rubric. An additional score will be given for progress over the semester between entry and exit. Scores will be entered into an academic profile that will identify relevant CCC academic history to seek patterns that correlate with writing skills.

Results will be reported as aggregates, distinguished only as *experimental* and *control*. The key question will be whether the students in experimental sections showed greater improvement (between entry and exit) than those who were in the control sections. After analysis, the findings will be used to guide improvements in writing pedagogy.

### Preliminary process results (January, 2004)

- We collected 21 samples from the experimental sections and 15 from control sections. Scanning them, most showed progress between entry and exit.
- Some students found the exit topic confusing and may not have demonstrated their best writing skills for it.
- The 2 experimental sections diverged more than planned from their common schedule of assignments. This divergence responded to the differing needs of students in the two classes.
- Although the experimental classes embedded Learning Styles balances implicitly into their common schedule, they differed in how explicit they were with Learning Styles language. Even in the one where the LS grid was the subject of discussion, follow-up focus on LS language was difficult since students' needs led in other directions.

### Scoring & findings

At a holistic scoring session in May of 2004, 4 samples from each of the 4 classes were randomly selected for scoring. The samples bore no identification except a code that indicated whether they belonged to the experimental or control section, but the code was unknown to the scorers. Two readers read each paper, first reading the exit sample and assigning a holistic score of 1 to 4 (low-high), and then comparing it with the entry sample, assigning a growth score of 1-4 for the differential between the two essays.

If the holistic scores were not identical or contiguous, the paper was scored by a third reader. The scores were then averaged and recorded as follows.

	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	High Growth	Tot	Avg
Control	1	1	4	2				(2)	8	1.94
Experimental		1	2	4		1		(6)	8	2.38

Though more samples should be studied, the initial pattern suggests that the students in the experimental sections were writing better at exit from the class than those in the control sections. In addition, 2/3 of the experimental section students were judged to have shown significant improvement between entry and exit.

Additional papers are available for further sampling if greater reliability is needed in results.