Professional and Technical Writing in the High School Setting

Kristy C. Bennett

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Professional and Technical Writing

in the High School Setting

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Kristy C. Bennett

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Chapter 1: Literature Review

Writing well "is a matter of learning about the writing situation one finds oneself in - its participants, its history, and its politics - and responding appropriately using the patterns that our predecessors in those situations have developed over time."

(Whitney, Ridgeman, and Masquelier 532)

When in elementary school, I was given the assignment to write an alternate ending for Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado." The class completed the assignment, and a few days later, the teacher returned the graded assignments. I earned a 100% A+ with an accompanying comment of how interesting and well written my ending was. Since that time, I had always assumed everyone found writing as easy as I did, whether it was creative or academic. I did not learn how very wrong I was until I became a teacher.

One reason I teach English is because learning and writing come naturally to me. I do not have to work hard to write effectively or clearly relay my thoughts and ideas to others. This was not the case for many of my students. My husband is a perfect example of the struggles I experienced with my students in terms of writing. He had never been a strong writer and struggled with writing throughout high school and college. When required to write for engineering purposes, in college classes and later his profession, he felt unprepared because he felt he lacked the skills he needed to write effectively in those settings. While he may have, at some point in high school or college, been taught skills he could have applied to those situations, he lacked the know-how to actually apply those skills.

My husband's experience is very similar to what many students experience, especially in the high school setting. I knew students had been instructed on writing in
previous English classes and in previous years, but they struggled to actually take that information and apply it to what we were currently writing in class. When we moved from writing essays to writing resumes or reports, it was like students had never put pen to paper before to express themselves. This baffled me until I thought about how vastly different the types of writing were. In general, teachers focus on educating students within the confines of academia while perhaps not fully understanding how to help students with the leap from academia to their professional lives following graduation. This is especially true in high school. Instead of students learning skills they see as directly applicable to their future lives, such as filling out a job application or clearly writing instructions for someone to follow, they are being taught to analyze a poem or justify a math solution. The skills they use to complete these tasks may be applicable after graduation, but many students do not understand how to apply those skills. For them, the formal process of learning is left within the walls of the school building, and anything done outside those walls is not something they consider as real learning or education. The issue is that, because of this viewpoint, students may be learning skills that are actually applicable in their lives outside of school, but there remains a clear disconnect for them.

This is why directly focusing on educating students in professional/technical writing is so important. Most students, after graduating either high school and/or college, will not need to write an essay ever again, but they will need to write e-mails that are professional and clearly communicate their needs. While the overall scope of “writing well” still matters with both types of writing, the methods to create “good” writing are vastly different. This is part of the reason students cannot easily move between academic
writing and workplace writing. They require two totally different types of communication, but students have spent most of their academic lives only being instructed in one type.

The positive here is that students can start to learn the types of communication they might need in their professional lives. They can be exposed to many different types of professional/technical communication that can start to give them a handle on how to communicate in their lives after graduation. While professional and technical communication can refer to different types of written communication, I am using them here to mean writing that presents “information to audiences with the ultimate purpose of getting work done” (Gerdes). To that end, any reference to professional communication is meant to represent both professional and technical communication.

For this thesis, I establish the need of professional communication in the high school setting first by analyzing literature on genre and genre theory along with Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) and professional writing in high schools and colleges. This serves to establish the importance of professional writing along with analyzing some methods that will be used to incorporate professional writing into the high school setting. Next, I analyze a study completed at a rural high school in central Illinois to understand two items: the types of writing students are currently being asked to complete and the faculty’s feelings and thoughts about student writing and professional writing. Finally, I develop a year-long class on professional writing that incorporates theories and methods from the literature review along with concerns and thoughts from the faculty of the rural school. The course will not only set students up to write effectively in the high school
setting but will also give them the tools to be conscientious communicators after graduation and into their future lives.

**Genre and Genre Theory**

Before genre theory and all its components can be understood clearly, it is important to start with what genre is. One of the earlier definitions of genre comes from Carolyn Miller in “Genre as Social Action” when she argues that “a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish” (151). From this definition, it becomes clear that genre is not about the specific parts or organization of a writing. Rather, genres become defined by the purposes they accomplish. To build on this, Amy Devitt writes in *Writing Genres* that “genre is a reciprocal dynamic within which individuals’ actions construct and are constructed by recurring context of situation, context of culture, and context of genres” (31). Genres are not only based on the context but are developed by the context and the context is developed by the genre. It is a reciprocal relationship with each defining the other. For example, when e-mails first started being widely used, the genre of an e-mail was still being established. The components of what constituted an e-mail were generally established (greeting, message to someone else, closing), but as more people used e-mail, the genre changed and adapted based on how people were using it. Instead of being a formal, immediate response to replace snail mail, e-mails became quick modes of communication that at times were not overly formal, depending on the context of its use. Users accepted what was defined as an e-mail but also changed the e-mail genre as it was used.
Charles Bazerman agrees with Devitt when he looks at genre as “a rich multidimensional resource that helps us locate our discursive action in relation to highly structured situations” (23). Genres can be understood and used by people to understand what the acceptable response is to different situations. To add to this, Diane Millar in “Promoting Genre Awareness in the EFL Classroom” writes that “genre researchers...argue that all texts depend on the context in which they are used. The purpose of the communication and the context, including the audience, the topic, and the mode, directly shape the organization and the language of a text” (3). When people need to write for any situation, their responses are dependent on the contexts in which they are writing. Grocery lists are written in one way whereas material lists are written in a vastly different manner. The situations of both lists directly relate to how the lists are created and what does or does not belong on each list. This same importance of genre comes into play for students every day. They focus on writing a response that does “what the teacher wants” and earns them a good grade. Their concern is not the genre because they do not understand the genre of what they are being asked to do.

For students to know what genre is appropriate to use for a situation, they need to understand in what context a genre would be used. Aviva Freedman in “Do As I Say” writes “full genre knowledge (in all its subtlety and complexity) only becomes available as a result of having written” (206). Students will be more likely to understand a genre once they have had to write the genre. Because genres are so influenced by the contexts in which they are used, there is some debate as to whether or not genres can even be learned outside the context or situation that calls for the genre as seen when Freedman questions “if genres are responses to contexts, can they be learned at all out of context?”
(“Do As I Say” 194). The question she raises is a reasonable one. This remains one of the main arguments against teaching genres in high school or college. Creating a realistic social situation that will help students understand genres more clearly can be a struggle but is not an impossibility. Setting a class project that establishes the classroom as a business and requires students to write in that context is one possibility. Setting this up involves a lot of initial work and following through until the project is over can be very time consuming, but the benefits to student understanding of genre can offset the time consumed.

There are some who believe teaching genre is outside the realm of possibility. Chris Fosen in “Genres Made Real” does an excellent job of bringing the issue of teaching genre to light. He writes that “building rhetorical skills in schools that will be useful to students later on, outside school, seems problematic at best” (4). The reason for the issue is that “neither a formalized pedagogy nor a teacher’s expert genre knowledge can offer a balanced and complex view of genres as the mediating and dynamic discursive force they seem to be” (Fosen 6). Because genres are so complex, as made clear earlier with the many aspects of genre to consider, teaching them in a way that will actually benefit students in the long run is an issue, at least according to Fosen.

However, to offset Fosen, Bazerman makes clear why teaching genres remains a necessity for students. Students, in general, are being dropped into rhetorical situations they are trying to understand in any class they take. They bring their own knowledge with them but “would benefit from signs posted by those familiar with the new academic landscape” (Bazerman 19). If teachers can educate their students on the genres they are being exposed to, they are more likely to be able to take the knowledge they already have
and feel more comfortable applying it. While teachers cannot expose students to everything there is to know about all genres, they can guide students in genres enough to help them be more comfortable in education, thus improving their chances of making a better future for themselves. Also, students being exposed to many different mentor texts can set them up for some success later when they produce the genre for themselves. If they have studied examples of genres that illustrate strong awareness of audience and word choice, they can more easily see how to use audience awareness in their own writing of genres.

Another benefit to educating students on genres is that they can start to see the recurrence of situations and genres. Students can understand that genres are established from writing situations happening again and again that call for certain genres. If a writing situation calls for a report of some kind, even if the genre of the report may change slightly, students can know that the genre of report would be the most beneficial to use in the situation present. The recurrence helps to establish genres, and it helps writers identify how to respond to situations. Bazerman explains that “the pressure of genre is not of conformity so much as of response to complexity, and insofar as we feel drawn to or seek traditional formal solutions, those standardized forms provide a means to begin to address the situation in a focused way” (23). Having some knowledge of genre gives students a formalized way to respond to situations, even if the situation has changed. The recurrence helps students more clearly understand the genre. Carolyn Miller also writes on genre recurrence when she writes that “what recurs is not a material situation (a real, objective, factual event) but our construal of a type” (157). Recurrence arises from people’s understanding of a situation, not that the exact situation will be repeated. This
supports the idea that genre should be connected to the situation calling for it, not that the
genre be mimicked exactly as before. The recurrence helps establish the connection
between the situation and the genre most appropriate based on the situation. Establishing
this idea for students early on with genres will benefit them when they move into new
discourse communities.

**Discourse Communities**

Patricia Bizzell defines a discourse community as “a group of people who share
certain language-using practices” who are “bound together primarily by its uses of
language” (222). The unification of the group is achieved through some project that its
members could not accomplish individually (222). The genres the group uses also aid in
defining the group. In general, this seems to cleanly fit into what genres are, socially-
created texts meant to serve a purpose.

Devitt in *Writing Genres* explains two issues she has with defining discourse
communities solely by their discourse or the genres they share: “the concept of discourse
community privileges discourse above other group activities, motives, and purposes; and
it disguises the social collectivity that shapes the very nature of the group and of its
discourse (and its genres)” (39). The term and focus of discourse community negates how
the groups help create genres, not just the genres creating the groups. For Devitt, it would
be much more accurate to define communities by “their common goals, values, or
identities than by their common discourse or genres” (*Writing Genres* 39). Because genre
creation is a reciprocal relationship between the individuals creating the genre and the
genre defining the group, it makes much more sense to take other social factors into
consideration when determining what defines a discourse community. In terms of
education, students belong to a number of discourse communities that serve a number of purposes, from being a student overall to students in individual subjects to members on extracurricular teams to teens interacting with peers and adults. Each of these groups requires not only different written discourse but different social interactions as well. Defining student groups according to common goals or identities makes much more sense than blanket labeling them all as being in the same discourse community.

Establishing discourse communities is especially important for students where "genres serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community" (Miller 165). Because genres are understood and established based on situations, teaching students how discourse communities use genres and how discourse communities affect genres can help them more clearly understand situations in which genres are used, both in school and in the professional world. In his overview of Writing across the Curriculum, David R. Russell defines education, especially at the college setting, as "initiation into a discourse community, a process of learning how to use language in a certain way to become accepted, literate, or, as is often the case in American higher education, credentialed in some profession" (53). If Russell believes this is what happens in education in college, starting the initiation process for students in high school would only benefit their movement into more focused discourse communities once they enter college or the workforce.

A problem with exposing students to discourse communities or the idea of joining a discourse community is that becoming a member of a discourse community takes time. Rochelle Kapp and Bongi Bangeni in "I Was Just Never Exposed to This Argument Thing" explain that "acquiring the deep structure of the disciplines and becoming critical
members of the discourse is a process, and has to be continually addressed within the context of the disciplines over time" (126). Becoming a full member of a discourse community can take years, so that process needs to be clear to students. While they are learning about genres and the groups that use the genres, students also need to know the challenges of joining a discourse community. However, if students “are to become critical members of, and contributors to, the discourse, rather than instrumental reproducers, they have to be allowed time and space to engage with the messy process of exploring (through talking, reading, and writing) who they are (and who they are becoming) in relation to the authoritative voices in the field” (Kapp and Bangeni 112). The process that can be best used for students to start towards this understanding of genres in discourse communities is genre awareness.

**Genre Awareness**

One of the clearer explanations of genre awareness comes from Diane Millar, a Regional Language Officer in Senegal. She explains that genre awareness is “the ability to select and use an appropriate genre based on a number of factors, including the purpose of communication, the context, and the people involved” (2). Genre awareness teaches students to analyze many different aspects of a genre to be able to understand how to respond in the situation the genre is used. Devitt writes that “genre awareness can teach students to seek the rhetorical nature of the genre, to understand its context and functions for its users, in order to avoid formulaic copying of a model rather than rhetorically embedded analysis of samples” (*Writing Genres* 201). The importance of genre awareness is that it gives students the tools they need to “learn to write any genre better through tackling it not as a neutral set of required conventions but as meaningful
social action” (Devitt “Genre Pedagogies” 153). Devitt explains that if genres are situational, “then genre pedagogies can use genres to help students perceive, understand, and even change situations” (“Genre Pedagogies” 146). Students who learn genre awareness are given tools that can help them access and analyze multiple situations and genres. They are not limited to learning how only a few genres are understood or composed.

For students, learning genre awareness is a way to keep students engaged. Anne Elrod Whitney, Michael Ridgeman, and Gary Masquelier in “Beyond ‘Is This OK?’: High School Writers Building Understandings of Genre” believe that “work with genre study can encourage flexible, aware writers who can discern for themselves the conventions of new genres” (527). Teaching students genre awareness can help them feel more in control of their education because they are not depending on someone else to guide them through a new genre. Bazerman writes that teaching genre awareness can be “a tool for framing challenges that bring students into new domains that are as yet for them unexplored, but not so different from what they know as to be unintelligible” (24). Students may approach a situation or genre with some knowledge of what to do, but teaching them genre awareness gives them other tools they can use to access new genres.

There may be some concern, especially in an English/language arts class, that exposing students to different types of genres actually makes the writing done in the humanities less important. This is not the case. Instead “students are likely to learn how powerful a tool writing is to carry out specialized work and how empowered they are in entering focused, specialized discussions in appropriately forceful ways” (Bazerman 26). Exposing students to genre awareness and teaching them about different genres and
discourse communities can help students understand how to communicate using different genres in their futures.

On a larger scale, teaching students genre awareness can help them transfer knowledge to “create lifelong learners who can write strategically and knowingly in any context they might encounter” (Devitt “Genre Pedagogies” 154). Genre awareness is beneficial way past the end of formal education. It gives students tools they can use to understand any genre they encounter along with possibly “increasing rhetorical flexibility, writing more effectively within unfamiliar writing situations or within new technologies, or developing critical thinking and effecting change” (Devitt “Genre Pedagogies” 157). The impact genre awareness has for students is much farther reaching than simply written communication. It involves teaching students an entire way to think about and analyze information.

A study conducted by Irene Clark and Andrea Hernandez illustrates why teaching genre awareness may be beneficial for students. It gives them the ability to transfer writing across different contexts. The goal of Clark and Hernandez’s project was to develop genre awareness, “the idea being that a metacognitive understanding of genre can help students make connections between the type of writing assigned in the Composition course - that is, academic argument - and the writing genres they encounter in other disciplines” (65). They wanted to give students the tools they need for transferability of what they learned. Without genre awareness, students “will not understand how the text ‘works’ to fulfill its purpose, and when they encounter a new genre in another course, they may lack the tools to engage with it effectively, which explains why students fall back so fixedly on the omnipresent five-paragraph essay”
Clark and Hernandez 67). Students understand the genre of the five-paragraph essay because they have written them for so long. When confronted with an unfamiliar writing task, if they do not know how else to respond, they will default to what they know. Genre awareness gives students skills to work to understand what they are unfamiliar with.

One of the benefits that genre awareness creates for students is transferability, or the ability for students to take what they know about a situation or genre and use it elsewhere. Devitt writes that "all writers must vary from the genre's situation every time they write, because no two situations are identical" ("Transferability" 218). This requires some transferability of understanding the general conventions of a genre through genre awareness and being able to transfer those conventions to the current setting and situation. The perceived similarity "of situation might lead to some writing skills being transferable from one writing event to the next, but not...outside of a common genre" (Devitt "Transferability" 219). Genre transferability is possible, but the transfer happens in the limited space of a shared genre. Transferability between subjects, a research essay in English versus a research essay in Biology, is not possible because there are too many generic differences that exist between the subjects. While the assignments share the same name, the purposes within the contexts of the subjects vary greatly. Because of this, straight transfer is extremely difficult if not nearly impossible for students. Genre awareness gives students ways to transfer how to analyze different genres to get access to them. Through genre awareness, students are able to understand how different subjects have differing needs in terms of writing. Even though something is called a research essay, students can apply genre awareness to discover the differences in research essays for different subjects and thus write the needed genre effectively.
Just as genre awareness can help with transferability, it can also aid students when they need to apply antecedent genres to new situations. Devitt writes that "just as writers perceive unique situations as somehow similar and so perceive and use the same genre, writers perceive newly encountered situations as sharing some elements with prior situations, and so they use prior genres when writing new ones" ("Transferability" 220). Students being exposed to many antecedent genres can be beneficial in this type of transferring that could take place. A possible issue with attempting to transfer what is known about an entire genre to an unknown genre is the possibility of misapplying a genre. Because genres are so dependent on situations and settings, the change to a different setting could mean the misapplication of an antecedent genre. In general, moving from the role of student to the role of employee can cause issues. Students are meant to show what they know or have learned while employees are meant to work towards what is best for the company. Writing a report of some kind as a student has the potential to be vastly different when a report is needed as an employee. This is part of the reason that genre awareness needs to be taught. If students have the ability to assess not only what genre is needed but also the social situation the genre is being used in, they are more likely to effectively write within the needed genre.

Student ability to transfer genres effectively can be positively influenced through antecedent genres which are genres that students know they can use to understand new genres. Miller writes that "our stock of knowledge is useful only insofar as it can be brought to bear upon new experience: the new is made familiar through the recognition of relevant similarities; those similarities become constituted as a type" (156-57). The types can be used to determine which antecedent genre is most relevant to a situation and how
to adapt that genre to a potentially new situation. Devitt writes that “writers are better served by having some genres in their repertoire with somewhat similar situations than by having only genres farther removed from the new situation” (“Transferability” 222). By having antecedent genres of any kind, writers and students at least have the chance at working towards understanding an unfamiliar genre. Without the antecedent genres to work from, writers and students are at a definite disadvantage in many situations, even with the knowledge of genre awareness. Teaching genres using genre awareness not only exposes students to different antecedent genres but gives them the skills needed to assess an unfamiliar genre and work to understand it.

Composition teachers at the high school and college levels need to question if they have “given students the opportunity to learn, if not acquire, genres that will serve helpfully as antecedent genres in future writing situations?” (Devitt “Transferability” 223). Devitt argues that composition teachers “should consider carefully what purposes, subjects, settings, reader and writer roles--in other words, what situations--might seem most similar to situations students are likely to encounter in the future” (“Transferability” 223) in addition to “teaching students about genres, including how to analyze new genres they encounter, so that they can select their antecedent genres mindfully and deliberately” (“Transferability” 224). Considering what genres would be most beneficial for students to learn is important, but more than that, teaching them genre awareness allows them to not only apply antecedent genres they know but know how to study and assess any new genres they encounter. Overall, teaching genre awareness “would enable students not only to understand how genres and situations shape the ways we write but also to become
Teaching genre awareness helps students in a larger scope than just education. It improves their chances of effectively communicating for the rest of their lives. Because there is an unending number of genres and genres are continually changing, learning how to analytically approach any genre students encounter throughout their lives gives them the ability to communicate effectively in any situation. This gives them more opportunities in their careers. Communicating effectively potentially sets students up for promotions and advancements in their future careers.

**Explicit Teaching of Genres**

One aspect of teaching genres that can be used with genre awareness is the explicit teaching of genres. Explicit teaching is where a teacher gives students the form of a genre and focuses on teaching the form of the genre itself without teaching or focusing on all the variations that could occur with the genre. In the high school setting, a clear example of this is the five paragraph essay. While this genre can be beneficial in certain situations, teachers present the five paragraph essay as a genre that is organized in the same manner, no matter what the subject or the purpose of the writing. By itself, explicit teaching does not benefit students in the long term, but in conjunction with genre awareness, there are beneficial aspects to it. Devitt helps us understand explicit teaching when she writes that “teaching the rules for playing particular genre games often leads to methods referred to as ‘explicit teaching,’ wherein the features and rules of the genre are taught directly” (“Genre Pedagogies” 148) or as Freedman defines it: “explicit discussions, specifying the (formal) features of the genres and/or articulating underlying
rules" (“Do As I Say” 194). In both cases, the focus is on the fact that genre features are taught directly. The form, purpose, and language use is directly taught to students. The issue is that this presents only one mutation of a genre as the sole form of that genre. Because genres are socially created, they morph and change depending on the situation. However, teaching a genre explicitly implies there is only one form and completely ignores the social side of genre formation.

If the purpose of learning genres is to acquire that genre, Freedman questions if "explicit teaching of genre can in fact lead to its acquisition" (“Do As I Say” 193). She goes on to explain that explicit teaching is "decontextualized, so that for example, would-be engineers are taught about workplace writing in the actual context of a university classroom or first-year students are taught about sociology papers in the context of a composition classroom" (“Do As I Say” 194). The issue is that the genre is removed from the social situation and becomes solely about the form. If students are only taught a form, they cannot understand how the form may change based on its use. They are not acquiring knowledge of the genre because they are missing the social aspect so closely linked to genres and their purposes. Whitney, Ridgeman & Masquelier explain that in actual teaching, teaching genres often becomes "‘teaching genres,’ that is, offering genres to students as preformed, discrete, and rigid vessels into which students’ ideas might be poured. Instead, to teach genre well is to teach students to understand genres in their social functions” (526). Reasons for explicit teaching of genre could range from time constraint to teacher comfort. Whatever the reason, only teaching genres explicitly is doing students a disservice and will generally not benefit them in the long run.
Even though explicit teaching seems like it is never a good idea, this is actually not the case. Freedman admits to the beneficial nature of explicit teaching when she writes that “explicit discussions of the formal features of genre...may prove useful for those students whose learning styles are appropriate, but only when such discussions are presented while students are engaged in authentic reading and writing tasks” (“Do As I Say” 205). In this context, authentic reading and writing tasks mean the genre is being used within the social context of when it would actually be used. If students are learning about workplace genres, such as reports, they are learning the genre within the context of reading reports and writing reports that have a clear purpose beyond instruction in the classroom. Explicit teaching allows students to immediately note the differences in genres. There is still some question, however, as to whether or not this would lead to acquisition.

Even if genre awareness is being taught, there is some use of explicit teaching of genres, or, as Devitt calls it, use of particular genres. Devitt writes that “though their motives and methods differ, all genre pedagogies use particular genres. Teachers whose goals are to teach genre awareness and genre critique, for example, use particular genres as examples to analyze, practice, critique, parody, and change” (“Genre Pedagogies” 150). At some point, if students learn about, critique, and write genres, they will be taught explicitly. They have to start with an actual example of the genre being taught, which means genre awareness will typically start with explicit teaching.

One of the challenges of explicit teaching “is to use existing genres without reinforcing a rigid - or worse yet, inaccurate - formula for writing” (Devitt “Genre Pedagogies” 151). The focus with explicit teaching of genres needs to be the reason the
genre is being taught explicitly, not to emphasize it as the only way the genre is written. When teaching genre awareness with explicit teaching, it needs to be extremely clear why the genre is being learned explicitly first. Then, once students understand that one genre, they move towards applying that antecedent genre to understanding other genres. It is not that explicit teaching always needs to be done with genre awareness, “but it may be necessary for people to perceive the purposes of those forms and their potential ideological effects” (Devitt Writing Genres 195) while Freedman agrees that “explicit teaching raises the learners’ consciousness so that when they read or write, they will ‘notice’ the relevant features at an unconscious level and internalize at that point the rules that have been discussed” (205). Explicit teaching of genre is just one part that feeds into genre awareness. Genre awareness also teaches students to be aware of audience and how audience affects rhetoric.

**Audience Awareness**

Because genres are socially constructed, audience is a major factor that affects them. To make the effects of audience on genre clear, Carol Berkenkotter, a professor in the Department of English at Michigan Technological University, created a study that had some interesting results. The study worked to describe mental processes writers use to attain audience awareness (389). She presented the same think aloud writing task to ten writers: five professors of rhetoric and composition and five professors who teach and publish in other disciplines. Within Berkenkotter’s study, participants “frequently reconceived their task as they thought about their relationship to their audience” (391). As participants worked through what they would write to a group of high school seniors, their purposes continually changed as their perception of their audience changed. Before
they could settle on the type of genre they wanted to engage with, they had to determine
the purpose their communication would serve in relation to their audience and the
audience’s needs.

A discovery in terms of audience awareness from Berkenkotter’s study is that the
purpose of the text seems to influence how much consideration is given to audience. In
her study, she found that “writers who wrote to persuade thought aloud about their
audience four times more often and in twice as many ways as those who narrated
personal histories” (393). The implication here is that audience seems to be directly tied
to purpose. If a writer’s purpose is to write from a personal perspective, there is much
less thought given to what would benefit the audience whereas persuading an audience
requires thinking much more about what the audience’s needs are. This needs to be
applied to teaching and genre awareness because the type of text being written is
influenced by the audience and what the audience is gaining from the written
communication.

When questioning and working through why audience may be more or less a
focus for some writers, Berkenkotter believes that the tendency of audience consideration
comes from experts having “scripts or plans stored in long-term memory which they are
able to retrieve to solve a problem. An expert writer...will have a number of stored plans”
(393). In this instance, expert writers have a number of antecedent genres they have used
in the past for different audiences. When presented with a new task, they pull from their
antecedent genres and previous experiences to determine what fits the new situation the
best, showing that exposure to and understanding of genres and audiences are necessary
when composing.
When questioning if students can be taught to think like expert writers in terms of audience, Berkenkotter’s outlook is initially bleak. She explains that students do not have the same previous knowledge skilled writers do, and school writing takes place in limited contexts (396). She continues that “school writing demands that the student write for a single authority, the teacher” (396). With this main audience focus, Berkenkotter states that “school writing stifles the development of audience representation because it precludes its necessity” (396). Students, in the typical high school academic setting, are not taught to consider audience because the teacher is the audience, unless they are told differently which rarely happens. This concern points to another reason audience awareness needs to be taught to students before graduating high school. Audience clearly affects writing, as shown earlier in Berkenkotter’s study, so students need to be taught to think about audience earlier in their academic career than college. She does go on to explain that this issue of student lack of audience awareness is starting to be addressed through rhetorical case method and audience-based heuristic, which “help students learn to handle the cognitive demands of writing for an audience” as well as a transactional approach developed by Peter Elbow that “helps writers cope with the affective problems that audiences can present” (397). Even though Berkenkotter’s initial outlook is bleak, in the 30 years since her study was published, there has been much work done to improve student awareness of audience with written communication, some of what Writing across the Curriculum is meant to address.

**Writing across the Curriculum**

Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) is when formal writing of some kind is done in subjects other than English classes. For example, writing being done in Science
classes is on Science topics and the writing is meant to reflect what is important in
writing in Science fields. However, WAC does not have such a clean, clear definition, as
James Kinneavy explains. In 1983, Kinneavy, a professor of English at the University of
Texas at Austin, wrote one of the earlier articles assessing what was becoming known as
Writing across the Curriculum. He starts by giving readers what he sees as the two main
breakdowns or definitions of WAC. He explains that the most frequent use is when “the
business of writing is taken over by the various departments” (13) while the second
approach focuses on how “all students should write prose about the concerns of their
disciplines, but they centralize the responsibility of training students in individual writing
departments” (14). The first approach Kinneavy dubs the individual subject approach
while the second is the centralized generic system.

Kinneavy explains that the first approach, the individual subject approach, is
beneficial in initiating writers into discourse communities because students are being
taught to write by members of that community. However, some drawbacks to this
approach are that students “do not learn to address a popular audience,” departments are
“isolated,” and “the specialist does not attempt to go beyond the university community
and speak to the populace at large” (Kinneavy 14). Students may become members of the
discourse community, but they are not prepared to write to or for the general public
whom are not members of the community. Students become trained to adeptly produce
genres in their discourse communities but struggle to communicate information outside
the community. While this issue may not seem problematic, most students will have to
communicate with people in different discourse communities in their professional lives.
If their writing is limited to communication only within their specific discourse community, they are being done a disservice in their education.

The second approach, the centralized generic system, originally grew out of technical writing classes taught at Brigham Young in the English Department which worked on “rhetorical principles that transcend departments--such as careful description, explanation and proof, and problems of definition and classification--and to some considerations of style and audience” (Kinneavy 15). The benefit here is that the base skills taught can be applied to various disciplines and writing tasks. However, because writing tasks are not situated specifically within the subject matter, “the assumed audience in such programs becomes the generally educated teacher” (Kinneavy 16). Moving from working within the discourse community and specific subject removes audience consideration for many students. While the writing can be understood more clearly by the general audience, the ability to communicate in narrowed discourse communities is negatively affected.

However, the overall benefits of the centralized generic system for the university and students outweigh the negatives. Teachers who specialize in writing are the ones teaching writing, meaning every department does not have to be trained in critiquing and grading writing, a major concern in the individual subject approach. Another benefit is that this approach “imposes a common language on the university community” (Kinneavy 16). Instead of communicating clearly only with members of a discourse community, students are taught to communicate clearly with generalists. This change in audience “requires the writer to move in the direction of the explanatory or informative” (Kinneavy 16) with both movements having stylistic and organizational benefits.
Teaching professional writing at the high school level shows these benefits in action. Students are required to write with their subjects in mind but must make the writing clear to someone outside the discourse community, meaning they must understand how to effectively and efficiently explain possibly complex ideas and principles to anyone.

Overall, Kinneavy suggests a meshing of the two approaches, which logically makes sense but can be a struggle in actual practice. There are multiple issues with scheduling, course requirements, and generally how much writing and in what fields there should be writing. He makes his point most clear when stating that “the English department must learn to speak the generic logics of the other departments of the university, and the isolated and insulated departments can make the other step toward a unifying language, the dialect of the general education reader” (20).

While WAC focuses on writing in different subjects to get the experience of writing in those subjects, Writing to Learn (WTL) focuses more on using writing as a means of understanding material in a subject. It is about students learning to express themselves and their ideas through writing, learning through the experience of writing. As defined by Sara Winstead Fry, an associate professor at Boise State University, and Amanda Villagomez, a middle school teacher at Four Rivers Community School, WTL is “the act of making a subject or topic clear to oneself by reasoning it in writing” (170). In other words, learning is achieved through writing, a core principle of Writing across the Curriculum. Anne J. Herrington, former director of the Developmental Skills Program at Johnson State College in Vermont, explains WTL as an approach implying that “students do have something to say and that the process of writing provides at once the way for them to discover and communicate it” (379). When students write through difficult
concepts for classes, they are thinking through and about the concepts in different ways than if they were discussing or taking notes on the concepts.

For WTL to work, teachers should create situations in their classes that stimulate student learning. For example, students in a science class are presented the concept of genes. After each lesson, students keep a notebook where they write down what they learned that day along with questions they have or any confusion they are experiencing. Then, students have a clear idea of what they may need more clarification on or what they may need help with. Students can also use these notebooks to write about the topics of genes in general and use that as a jumping off point for a writing done for the class on genes and gene therapy, for example. For WTL to be beneficial, teachers should use the writing “to serve their own pedagogical ends, not their preconceived notions of writing teachers’ end” (Herrington 380). This directly connects to WAC. Students should be taught writing that will benefit their education, either by the writing being directly related to a subject or through learning what makes writing ‘good’ for that subject. Professional writing fulfills what is desired for both WAC and WTL through focusing on improving writing in areas outside of English/language arts.

As Herrington explains, the writing assignments teachers give students in WTL “should be used as opportunities to learn to use the particular patterns of inquiry of a discipline” (381) or the genres in those disciplines. Lab reports are commonly used in high school science classes, and students keeping a science log for their experiments can help them write their lab reports more effectively. They keep a running log of what they are doing during the experiment. Then, they will use that information later in writing their lab report. This is another way professional writing instruction benefits students and
teachers. Students are exposed to the genres used in different fields through practicing and analyzing those genres in class assignments.

For WTL to be beneficial to students, teachers need to scaffold assignments from less complex to more complex. Take a history class for example. Students are looking at historical events and working to understand them. The scaffold of assignments for analyzing an historical event would move from personal response to summarizing the view of someone at the time to analyzing two different responses to the historical event and understanding what each response is arguing and how it is doing that. Historians are analyzing events and writers at the time, but students starting in a history class cannot immediately jump to that level of analysis. Instead, they have to be slowly guided into that work. Scaffolding assignments is especially important in introductory classes or with introductory material “where a student is being exposed to the particular methodologies and jargon of a discipline for the first time” (Herrington 382). Students will struggle to understand how the writing is helping them learn if they are already struggling to understand what the writing assignment is asking them to do.

As with everything teachers do in their classes, they need to be extremely aware of what students need to learn and in what order for students to be successful in a class or in a subject. One of the earliest considerations teachers need to make when creating writing assignments is to “specify not only the topic, but also the purpose and audience” (Herrington 383) for the writing. This can be accomplished through teaching students genre awareness or by teaching them explicitly. The decision of which method to use relates to the purpose of the writing. Is the assignment being used to learn a specific idea or concept, or does it involve thinking through writing that will appear again later for
students? Overall, teaching genre awareness that starts with some explicit instruction would help students be successful with most writing assignments used in classroom settings because they learn not only the specific parts of genres but also how to analyze new genres they have not been specifically exposed to in class.

Herrington also explains that WTL helps establish for students how writing is a process that starts with defining the task and what it needs, formulating ideas and shaping the ideas into drafts, and finishing with a clearly-stated final product (386). All formal writing students do needs to be a process that starts with being aware of what the genre is asking for and moves to creating the genre to accomplish the required task.

While WTL and WAC seem like very beneficial ideas for all teachers to incorporate and all students to use, there still remain questions as to the benefit or even helpfulness of either idea. In his article “How Well Does Writing Across the Curriculum Work?”, Toby Fulwiler examines the WAC program at Michigan Tech from 1977 to 1983 and notes the lessons he has learned from being in charge of the program and conducting faculty workshops over the years. One area that arises as an issue has been terminology, specifically the use of ‘expressive’ writing. When developing the teacher workshops, he and his team believed “more expressive writing in all subject areas would help students to learn better and to learn to write better” (Fulwiler 115). While faculty struggled with what expressive writing was, this is one of the main focuses of WTL.

Students journal or self-reflect, so they are aware of what they do know and what they need to work towards understanding. Once the term and concept were clearly explained in the study, Fulwiler explains that more faculty were willing to incorporate WAC, even if they still did not fully see the benefit in expressive writing.
An unexpected benefit of WAC that Fulwiler notes is that, at Michigan Tech, "an attitude shift had occurred which elevated writing to serious business in the campus community" which "was reflected in the communication skills of graduating seniors" (121). Even though there is no way for all faculty to sell into the benefits of more writing or WAC, putting WAC into place causes a shift in focus from writing as just another assignment or waste of time to writing as a beneficial mode of learning.

Fulwiler saw the program have a much larger effect than solely on improving student writing; it developed "into a comprehensive long-term program to develop more fully all the interrelated learning and communication skills of the whole campus community" (124). This is one of the greatest benefits a successful WAC program can have. The program will improve student writing, but it will also have a larger effect of refocusing the importance of writing for all teachers and students. The discourse community of the school as a whole comes together to share the same language and general focus. If writing becomes a focus for all, there becomes a large discourse community that has shared values and shared purposes which means students will see overall the importance of learning clear communication and writing skills.

David R. Russell, professor of English at Iowa State University, argues that one reason WAC has not had permanent effects on academia is that it upset the idea that writing can be a solely learned skill outside a discipline-specific setting (53). The assumption that writing can be taught generally and then applied in any setting has been the basis for academia for decades, but WAC shows that not to be the case. Writing in multiple disciplines opens up many more possibilities for students than learning how to generally write well in high school or freshman composition in college and then struggle
to apply that general writing elsewhere. This is where genre awareness can be so beneficial. Students learn how to analyze genres and situations and create genres that are appropriate for the situation. The analytical skills learned become fully transferable because the skills are not anchored within any specific discipline but in the ability to read a genre of any discipline, analyze it, and produce a sample of that genre for that discipline.

A benefit of WAC in colleges and universities is that it forges “links between disciplines without attempting to create and impose a single overarching discourse community on academia” (Russell 68). While the college and university shares the overarching goal of educating students, separate disciplines still seem to remain separate discourse communities with one shared common goal. WAC allows there to be a common language between the disciplines which allows students access to multiple fields and communities without having to be fully initiated into only one community. As Russell writes, in an ideal world, WAC or “cross-curricular writing instruction would initiate students into the discourse community of a professional community and give them extensive experience in negotiating the discourse of other communities, other disciplines” (69). Even without the ideal world, the positives that WAC provides to students outweighs the challenges WAC may have.

There are some challenges to WAC. In “Constructing Meaning in the Disciplines,” Peter Smagorinsky suggests that “an exclusive focus on writing as a mode of learning limits, rather than enables, students to construct meaning across the curriculum” (164). He explains that the typical stance by WAC programs is that “writing...is regarded as a tool with the capacity to promote thinking across the
curriculum, even in disciplines in which a written product is not the standard medium of communication and representation” (161). For WAC or the idea behind WAC to be beneficial to all students, “each discipline should endorse the notion that meaning construction is the goal of learning, with the specific medium of meaning construction determined by the historical values of the discipline and the consensus of the participants in the transaction” (Smagorinsky 162). Smagorinsky argues that writing is one possible medium that achieves the purpose of helping students work through concepts and subject matter in disciplines. However, the discipline and the purpose of the assignment should dictate the most appropriate medium. This does something to assuage fears for teachers outside the English realm. The name Writing across the Curriculum implies, much like Fulwiler does, that writing and different types of writing (personal, formal, reflective, etc.) remain the only beneficial means to produce meaning for students. However, Smagorinsky argues otherwise. Even in the context of the English class, Smagorinsky believes that “writing should be one of the many types of composition allowed for the construction of meaning” (164). Students being literate in ways other than writing has huge benefits, especially in today’s technology-based world where writing text may be one small part of a much larger project.

Larry Beason, in “Feedback and Revision in Writing across the Curriculum Classes,” examines feedback and revision in writing across the curriculum classrooms because “we cannot automatically assume that research on student writing in composition classrooms informs us about writing done in writing across the curriculum (WAC) classroom” (395). The reason Beason finds this important is that “teachers across a campus who are hoping to facilitate student writing would profit from knowing what
students are (and are not) doing when asked to revise after receiving feedback” (396).

From his study, Beason found that while the WAC classes he studied varied at times in terms of commenting and revision, “in several important regards they reflected pedagogy and practices encouraged in composition literature” (417). This supports the focus of what WAC is trying to accomplish. If students are meant to learn basic concepts of ‘good’ writing in WAC classes along with content material, the fact that the classes studied approached feedback and revision in a similar fashion to composition theory shows the beneficial nature of WAC.

**Professional writing in education**

WAC in general has become the expectation in most high schools with students writing in all subjects. However, it seems that the purpose of the writing is lost on the students. They know they have to write in physical education or art or culinary occupations, but they do not see the purpose of it. This is where focusing on teaching professional writing with genre awareness can be beneficial. Instead of students writing with no understanding of purpose or context, teaching students how to analyze an exercise article or art review or recipe and then write or respond to that genre is much more beneficial. Overall, professional writing is not something taught regularly in the high school setting. Part of the reason for that, from a genre perspective, is brought up by Nell Duke et al in “Teaching Genre with Purpose”. While “common core state standards...are organized, in part, by types of text, such as literature and informational text” (Duke et al 34), the issue with teaching genres is that it “requires deeper understanding of genre than many of us developed in preservice or inservice teacher
education” (Duke et al 37). This is especially true of professional writing where teachers are not fully initiated members in the discourse communities, if they are members at all.

Juanita Williams Dudley, author of “Griffin in the English Department” and former professor at Purdue University, explains two possible reasons professional writing is not typically taught in high school: teachers “have difficulty in finding composition texts that incorporate useful chapters on technical writing” and they “may doubt the advisability of mixing assignments designed to stimulate an appreciation of poetic synaesthesia with those aimed at teaching a student to ‘define and describe a rotary potato peeler’” (174). Finding an effective balance that accomplishes both tasks is an extremely daunting task for high school teachers whom are already taxed with overly-large classes and precious little planning time.

Dudley defines good professional writers as ones who “make an immediate and forthright statement of purpose, limit their scope to feasible goals (which they most often set about attaining with orderly, deductive logic), and then proceed to interpret and evaluate their findings with pristine objectivity” (175). This is Dudley’s view on professional writing, but in the years since she published, the view of professional writing has become much broader, encompassing not only technical writing but also such writing such as genre theory and rhetoric. While there are times where the type of writing Dudley defines is used, such as science labs, this is generally difficult writing to come by in high schools where the focus with writing traditionally remains on literary and historical analyses.

While professional writing is not typically taught in the high school setting, Dudley gives us a few reasons that it should be. Professional writing is communication
that is all around us, from labels on clothes to installation instructions for an air filter. Any time any kind of technology, both high technology like computers and low technology like eyeglasses, is used, there may be a need for some type of written communication. This type of writing should be taught in high school because, for one, “any attempt to get students to reify concepts results in better writing--and not just better technical writing” (Dudley 177). Students having to work through concepts and descriptions to make them crystal clear causes students to focus on what they write and really break it down, aspects of writing that all students can benefit from. Another reason professional writing should be taught is that it allows scientific- and technical-oriented students “to write on subjects dear to their hearts” (Dudley 180). Allowing students to write on non-English topics can potentially spark an interest in their writing and education that they long ago abandoned after much poem writing and literary analysis.

Dudley argues that high school composition courses should have at least one unit on professional writing because of the benefit to students; “any student with a predilection for engineering or technology has as much right to instruction in defining, describing, and analyzing concrete objects and mechanical processes as has a student with a bent toward creative writing or literary criticism to instruction in making a subjective response to a blind date, a poem, or a summer day” (174). For education to be beneficial to all, students need to be exposed to many different types of written communication, especially students who are more logical and scientific/mathematic-minded. Including professional writing at the high school level provides students who are more logical with writing they understand and are more likely comfortable completing.
Jonathan Bush and Leah Zuidema, in their series “Professional Writing in the English Classroom,” express their belief that “professional writing concepts tie in closely to best practices in teaching writing and are well-supported by the nascent Common Core State Standards” (“Designing A High School” 94), showing that teaching professional writing at the high school level can be beneficial and is a logical fit within the state standards. They also write that when professional writing is done well, “it takes into account the writer’s purposes, the needs and expectations of the audience, the conventions of genre, and the complexities of situation and context” (“Professional Writing” 117). This is exactly what genre awareness works to teach students. Doing this allows teachers to help students make effective writing choices which in turn “help them to understand writing as the complex, important (and fun!) task it can be” (“Professional Writing” 119). Bush and Zuidema finally write that they like teaching professional writing because it allows them to “emphasize cultural contexts and introduce practical genres, to engage young writers in authentic decisions and processes, and to provide them with opportunities for reaching real audiences and addressing problems in their schools and communities” (“Professional Writing” 120). While professional writing is not typically done widely at most high schools, the benefits available to students show how important including professional writing is for students.

Dr. Steven M. Gerson, in his “Teacher’s Guide to Technical Writing,” explains that technical writing is an important skill because “an employee will spend at least 20 percent of his or her time writing,” and “this number increases as an employee’s responsibilities increase” (2). Students mistakenly believe that once they leave formal education, there will be little need for written communication any longer. That is clearly
not the case, especially for students who want to be managers, CEOs, and owners of their own businesses. All businesses require written communication, and really almost anything can be considered a business, from hospitals to restaurants to even schools. In any of these businesses, individuals need to use written communication to share ideas, establish guidelines for conduct and rules for workers, or release information to the public on services available. Students, upon graduation, will most likely not be writing essays any longer, but they need to know that their lives of using written communication are just beginning.

While colleges assume graduates need to know how to write on the job, one of the first studies to actually look at writing on the job comes from Lester Faigley, a professor in the Department of Rhetoric and Writing at the University of Texas at Austin, and Thomas P. Miller, English professor at the University of Arizona. They wrote an article titled "What We Learn from Writing on the Job" where they wanted to create a broad picture of writing of college-educated people. From their research, they drew three conclusions, one of them being that "writing is an important and frequently used skill across all major types of occupations and employers of college-trained people" (564). If writing is being done so widely in many different occupations, starting students on the road to learning how to analyze many different types of writing and genres will only benefit them later in life. As stated previously, students do not believe they will write much upon graduation, from high school or college, but that is simply not the case, and they need to be made aware of that before graduating and joining the professional world.

Having help in transitioning from high school to college or from college to the professional world is another benefit students can gain if genre awareness is taught with
professional writing. Chris Anson and L. Lee Forsberg with the University of Minnesota conducted research on moving from academic to non-academic settings. They write that their “research shows that becoming a successful writer is much more a matter of developing strategies for social and intellectual adaptations to different professional communities than acquiring a set of generic skills” (201). While they are specifically focused on moving from academic to nonacademic, the movement from high school to college could potentially cause the same types of issues for students. According to their research, adaptable skills being taught to students are much more beneficial than the generic writing skills traditionally taught in high school English classes.

At the conclusion of their study, Anson and Forsberg find that there was an “ongoing process of adapting to a social setting, involving not only the idiosyncratic textual features of a discourse community but a shifting array of political, managerial, and social influences as well” (225). This directly correlates with the social nature of genre and how genres are formed. To become a member of the discourse community, novice members not only learn about the written genres. They also have to learn about the social situations associated with the genre and the discourse community. This transition can be made easier if students have been taught how to analyze the situation they are looking at along with the genre itself.

**Conclusion**

For students to be successful in their lives both in high school and after, whether in a post-secondary setting or in the workforce, they need to have the necessary skills to be successful in written communication. Teaching students genre awareness will give them those skills to be more successful at analyzing and producing the many types of
writing they will be expected to do in their lives. Teaching students how to not only read a scientific report, but analyze the purpose of the report genre, how it is being used in the situation, and what purpose it serves overall opens students up to the ability to read any type of genre and be able to analyze and produce that genre, meeting whatever needs it is serving. Exposing students early to professional writing through a genre awareness approach will give them the head start they need to be successful. Before establishing what a class would look like that teaches in this manner, it is important to know the type of writing currently being done in a small rural high school along with the teacher perceptions of writing in their classroom and in the school overall. This will be explained in the next chapter.
Chapter 2: Case Study

While reading and thinking through all the research on genre studies, Writing across the Curriculum, and professional and technical writing, it became clear to me how challenging it will be to develop a class that effectively incorporates the most beneficial theoretical principles and puts them into practice. There are many different theories and concepts that appear in research which might be beneficial to incorporate into a class, but I wanted to create a class that not only incorporated the most beneficial theories for students but also would smoothly fit into the school curriculum. I need to develop a class that provides students something they are not getting in their current classes. To be able to do this, I need to know what students are doing as far as writing in their classes. This is why I developed my case study.

The purpose of the case study was twofold: to get teacher feedback on student writing and to see what types of writing assignments students were assigned in classes across all subject areas. Both portions of the case study work to answer the following research questions:

- What types of writing are being completed in upper-level classes at Marken High School?¹
- What amount of writing would be considered academic versus professional/technical?
- What are teacher perceptions of student writing in their subject areas?

I felt I needed this information to be able to develop a class which benefits students in

¹ The name of the school has been changed to protect anonymity of study subjects.
their futures and offers them something they are not currently doing in other classes. I also wanted to get opinions from other teachers about how they view student writing and their thoughts on technical writing for students. I wanted to know how teachers perceive student writing to get another angle on student writing. Teachers, in general, discuss how students cannot write well. I wanted to get some more feedback from those teachers about student writing. I wondered what some possible reasons might be that students seemed to be struggling with writing in other classes. Part of it probably stems from students not seeing the transferability of what they are doing, but I wondered if a teacher's perception of writing or the type of writing students were doing might be other reasons students struggled with writing in other classes.

**Method**

I completed the case study at Marken High School, a small rural school in central Illinois with an enrollment just under 650 students. Subjects offered at the school range from core subjects (English, math, science) to vocational classes (agriculture, foods, business, machining). Teacher experience ranges from first year of teaching to 20 plus years of experience with an equal mix of male and female. Administration at the high school expects all students to complete writing in all classes. To get an accurate response for my research questions, I needed to get feedback from as many teachers as I could in as many subject areas as I could.

**Survey Responses**

To achieve the first purpose of the study, to get teacher feedback, I created a survey online and e-mailed it to the entire staff (Appendix A). The questions on student writing focused on writing done in Spring 2017 and Fall 2017 along with questions
asking for teacher feedback on writing in general. Responses to my questions gave me an idea of the amount of writing students were assigned in Spring 2017 and Fall 2017 along with how teachers perceive student writing and staff feelings about technical writing specifically.

Teachers were given a two-week frame to complete the online survey. In those two weeks, 18 teachers responded. Marken High School has 34 full-time teachers on staff. While I would have liked more participation, 53% is an acceptable number to get a sense of the writing done at the high school. The first question of the survey asked teachers to select the largest student population they taught in the focus semesters. Answers ranged from only teaching freshmen to teaching all four grades at the high school. Teachers were not asked to identify subject matter. The breakdown of grades taught is as follows: eight selections for freshmen and juniors while five selections for sophomores and seniors. Six of the teachers responded that they taught more than one level of students in Spring and Fall 2017.

The next question asked about the average number of writing assignments students were asked to complete in the focus semester. Responses ranged from “none” to seven. Types of writing included step-by-step instructions, lab reports, extended responses, literary analysis, book project, letters, self assessments, and program documentation. For the survey, extended response was meant to be a blanket term referencing any writing from a paragraph to a page. This broad terminology allowed teachers to respond with the types of writing they do that they would not consider an essay. Five of the teachers responded that they used extended response. Of the five, four of them stated that students complete writing someone in their field would write.
Of the 18 overall responses, 13 stated that students do complete writing someone in their field would write. Two of the teachers responding no to this question stated that students write step-by-step instructions when they do write. In this instance, the fact that students are writing out instructions but it is not what someone in the field would writing is interesting. I question why students write the instructions if it is not related to what would realistically happen in the subject.

At this point, questions moved from teacher perception of writing overall to specifically focusing on technical writing. The first question about technical writing asked participants if students completed technical writing in their classes. Nine teachers responded that students do not complete technical writing. Four of the teachers who responded that students do not complete technical writing also answered that students wrote extended responses for the class.

Teachers who responded that students do complete technical writing in their classes answered a follow-up question asking them to explain the types of writing students were doing that they considered technical for the field. There were an interesting number of responses. The explanation of technical writing given on the survey was that “technical writing is writing completed in and geared towards a specific field”. This is a fairly broad definition which of course garnered a broad range of responses. One teacher responded that “lab reports are done by all types of scientists and researchers” while another wrote that “literary analysis is a common exercise one would use in [English Language Arts]. The primary objective is to state an argument and then to support it adequately”. Still another response simply stated students “must defend a choice with evidence-based arguments”.
The final question asked teachers if they thought students would benefit from incorporating technical writing into their high school classes. They all responded yes. If they answered yes, they were then asked a follow-up question as to why they answered yes for the previous question. Responses ranged from “it’s important to have a variety of writing instruction available to students” to “I feel it would be more useful to them later on and perhaps give them experience with material they could possibly encounter post graduation”.

*Writing Assignments Breakdown*

The second portion of my study required teachers to submit writing assignments, so I could see what types of writing assignments students were asked to do in classes across all subject areas. Unlike the survey that was open to teachers at all levels, I only wanted writing assignments from upper-level classes. Because professional and technical writing will be taught with genre awareness in the created technical writing class, it is important for students to be mature enough to handle the level of analysis needed for genre awareness. Also, learning about professional and technical writing will be more beneficial to older high school students whom are closer to either entering the workforce or attending some kind of post-secondary education. Their knowledge of genre awareness and analyzing genres will be more beneficial as they move outside the high school setting whereas underclassmen still have a few more years to acquire genre awareness skills. Because the end result of this research will be to develop a class for seniors to take, it is important to know what types of writing students are doing in other classes, so I know how to create a course that will add to their education and not repeat what is already being done.
I once again e-mailed teachers and asked for any who teach upper-level classes to send me any formal writing assignment students have completed from Spring and/or Fall 2017. For the study, I defined formal writing as writing that required students to write more than a few sentences or writing that students had multiple days to complete. I intentionally left the definition broad to get a larger selection of writing assignments. I ended up with 19 individual writing assignments that teachers submitted. The 19 assignments come from 11 different courses that cover a range of subject areas including physical education, chemistry, biotechnology, Earth Science, AP US History, computer programming, manufacturing, autobiography and memoir, War Literature, composition, and consumer economics. I was pleased with the variety of subjects represented through the sample.

After receiving the assignments, I worked on first deciding how to classify them (Appendix B). My focus with the assignments is to determine the type of writing students were being assigned and to divide the assignments into academic vs. professional/technical. When I was separating them, I took into account not only what the assignment was asking students to do but also what the written product would be. There were four assignments that were a challenge to clearly put into one group over the other. The reason was that the assignments did not clearly specify what the written responses would look like. One assignment asked students to write up information on a Peace Corps site that analyzed the country’s economy among other items, but the method of write-up was not clearly laid out. If the write-up was informational only for the teacher, I would consider this an academic assignment, but if students responded as a proposal to visit that site, the assignment would be professional. This same type of issue arose with other
assignments that seemed academic but could have been professional depending on what the written response was meant to be.

Excluding those four assignments from clearly belonging in either group leaves seven assignments in the professional/technical writing category and eight assignments in the academic category. The determining factor for where each assignment belonged is what the written response to the assignment requested students to do. The academic assignments asks students to write either a five-paragraph essay format or were informative in nature. The obvious audience for each of these assignments was the teacher. Students wrote to show their knowledge or thoughts about a topic, but in general were not writing for anyone outside of the classroom setting. For the academic assignments, students were asked to write multiple-page essays in response to the task laid out for them. One asked students for a one-page summary of an article students read. Otherwise, written responses to assignments were expected to be anywhere from 2-3 pages with a focus on students providing support for what they wrote.

The professional/technical writing assignments had a much different focus. Even though only one of them clearly states the audience, the purposes of all of them clearly relate to real-world or business. One of them instructs students on how to write and format a formal thank you letter. Three others are lab reports for various science classes. Another one asks students to create a plan on how to work with the community to bring more qualified people in to fill skilled positions. A final one walks students through the steps of developing a computer program in addition to presenting that same program to a user of the program. Also, these assignments clearly lay out how the written response to the assignment should look. There is clear explanation of what information is required.
and how it should be formatted. There is no personal response or reflection. The closest example to this is in the lab reports when students reflect on what went right and wrong with the lab. Otherwise, students were clearly responding to a scenario or situation. Length of written responses were not clearly stated, but responses did need to include all the required information and meet the guidelines laid out.

**Results and Conclusions**

Before analyzing any of the survey responses or assignment sheets, I was expecting to find most of the writing assignments in the upper-level classes at the high school focused on academic writing. My first research question asked what types of writing students were completing. This ended up being a much broader range than I expected. Students were asked to write anything from a 1-page summary to a five-step explanation on creating and developing a program. While about half of the assignments did ask students to complete traditional academic writing, such as an essay of some sort, there were just as many assignments that asked students to write to a specified audience or for a specific purpose.

These results are both positive and negative. It was refreshing to see how many different assignments were asking students to complete professional or technical writing within the specific field they were studying. Students wrote full lab reports after experiments that clearly included not only what they did but also reflected on the experiments. This writing accomplishes the same type of focus asked of people working through a problem at work or in science classes at the college level. Having students learn how to write lab reports in this manner gives them a transferability to science classes they may take in college which will ask them to write lab reports. Previous exposure to lab
reports for students has the potential to make this task in college easier for them. In another class, students wrote personal narratives that, according to the assignment sheet, serve the purpose of practicing a college application prompt response. Students are being taught the genre of the application essay for college applications. This is something that students are typically not exposed to unless it is specifically taught, but it is very beneficial to learn. This opens them up to understanding the genre of the application essay which will hopefully start students down the track of working to understand other types of essays besides the five-paragraph essay they have been conditioned to use.

There were some negatives in terms of the academic assignments. Part of the concern arises from a possible inaccuracy in the survey. Teachers who responded that they taught more than one level of students in Spring and Fall 2017 could potentially create inaccurate numbers for the question on the average number of writing assignments, but one of the teachers who responded split his/her answer into “on average two [writing assignments] in the upper classes and 5-6 informal assignments in the lower classes”. Not having completely accurate counts for assignments could mean the findings are not accurately portraying the situation at the school.

Even with it not being totally clear how many writing assignments upper-level students were completing, there is still concern about the assignments. Six of the academic assignments asked students to write either a four- or five-paragraph essay, even though for a few of the assignments, another type of writing may have been more beneficial. While the five-paragraph essay can be beneficial in certain circumstances, relying extensively on this genre for student written responses misses an opportunity for students to learn other genres. Teachers should be thinking in terms of what written
response would be the most appropriate for assignments. This allows for students to write authentically in response to assignments in subjects in school.

In one assignment, students were asked to analytically compare a novel to the movie version of the novel. The assignment itself states that the analysis is set up “nicely for an easy, five paragraph essay” but does give students the option of changing the organization if they would like, “as long as [they] have a clear intro, body, and conclusion”. While this type of assignment could be written in paragraph format, changing the written part to something that would logically match the purpose, like a review for Rotten Tomatoes, may help set up for students what they are being asked to write. The purpose of what they are doing would be clearer through choosing another genre to actually write. For this assignment, because many students are familiar with the movie review genre, presenting their written response with that genre in mind may make for more engaged writers who work to create something of substance. Because students write the five-paragraph form so much, changing up the writing will allow them to see other types of written genres that can accomplish similar tasks.

In the same way, an informative essay on work ethic is set up in five-paragraph format. Again, while this format can be used, this may not be the most logical fit for the assignment. Students in this assignment are being asked to reflect on work ethic, define what it is, describe problems with a lack of work ethic, and describe the importance of work ethic. The only purpose made clear to students is that the essay is informative. This assignment could still be informative, but changing the genre from an essay to maybe a brochure or handout on work ethic may help students make sense of why they are writing
on this topic. Presumably the purpose is to make the importance of a good work ethic clear to students, but that purpose can be achieved in ways other than through an essay.

A possible reason the essay is assigned in general could be teacher comfort with using that genre. If teachers are already uncomfortable having students write in class, they may fall back on a form they are familiar with using and having written themselves. Another possible reason for assigning the essay could simply be that the teacher has been told to incorporate writing in his/her subject, and this accomplishes that goal. It may be that having students write anything other than the essay genre has not occurred to the teacher. There are a multitude of reasons for assigning the essay genre, but it is unclear how beneficial it is for students to write the essay genres as much as they do according to the writing assignments submitted.

In addition to the types of writing students were asked to do, I wanted to compare the amount of writing students did that was academic versus professional. This was a surprise to me. I was expecting to find that students did much more academic writing than professional in their upper-level classes. However, the split was almost perfectly 50/50. While I did not have assignments from all upper-level classes and only had one to two assignment from the upper-level classes I did get a sample from, the variety is enough that it can be counted as reliably showing the trend of writing assignments at the high school.

The survey results supported the findings from the types of writing assignments submitted. For the survey, the final follow-up question asked responders to explain why they answered yes to the question about the importance of technical writing. One teacher who does not have students write in class explained that “some students looking for
employment in technical areas will be better prepared for these positions if these writing
skills are developed” while another explained that “writing a technical summary is a lot
different than writing a paper and students need to be able to follow an existing format
and adhere to it”. Many teachers saw how students could benefit from doing technical
writing, no matter what they answered for writing in their own classes. The fact that half
of the assignments submitted were professional writing in nature support how beneficial
teachers believe professional and technical writing to be.

Students are being asked to write a large amount of what could be called
professional writing, even though it is not being presented to them as such. Students
know they have to write lab reports in their science classes, but they most likely do not
think about that writing being considered anything other than the type of writing done in
the sciences. The assignments that fit smoothly into one category or the other made it
very clear for students what the expectations were for the finished written product. This
was a benefit to both categories of assignments. Students have a much better chance of
doing well if they clearly know what is being expected of them. This is where genre
awareness can be beneficial for students. If they know what a writing sample looks like
for what they are writing, they have a greater chance at successfully producing that
written product. The large amount of professional and technical writing being completed
by students in the last two years of high school should be preparing students for their
lives after graduation, either in the workforce or in college. However, to determine if this
is true, a separate study would need to be done that follows students from high school
into work or college and get their perceptions of how prepared they did or did not feel.
This also raises the question of transferability. Even though students are being asked to

complete professional and technical writing, unless they are being taught how to analyze
and think through the writing they are completing, students might be missing out on the
possible transferability of what they are writing.

It was also clear, through the four assignments that did not cleanly fit into either
category, that some teachers are not being clear with students on what the writing
expectations are. The assignments did not cleanly explain the type of written response
teachers were expecting from students. This could possibly be because the teacher
themselves were not clear on what they wanted from students or they possibly would
accept many different types of written responses to the assignments. In either case, not
having the expectations laid out for students could very easily lead to confusion for
students. This gives students another challenge in addition to writing what they are being
asked to already. Teaching genre awareness would give students the ability to search for
sample written responses for the type of assignment they are being asked to do. Then they
could analyze the samples they find to understand how to write for the assignment.
Students would feel less apprehension about completing the assignment and would
probably produce a better written product than is being done currently.

My final research question dealt with teacher perception of student writing and
technical writing both in subject areas and overall. While all teachers claimed that
students learning technical writing was beneficial, there were only nine teachers whom
were actively having their students complete technical writing. If all teachers stated found
it beneficial, I assumed more teachers would have their students complete technical
writing. However, there are a number of possibilities for this discrepancy. It could be that
the teachers who responded had a different understanding of what technical writing
would be than others. One teacher may have considered step-by-step instructions as technical writing while another did not. If this is the case, there could actually be more teachers assigning technical writing than originally thought. There is also the possibility that teachers are completing the writing just to complete the writing but are not using the writing as a beneficial part of class. Marken High School asks students to write in all classes, so some teachers may simply assign a writing assignment to meet that requirement without attempting to smoothly integrate the writing into class.

Another issue is how the understanding of writing assignment types change from person to person. What one teacher considers an extended response may be something vastly different to another teacher. In the survey, five teachers answered that they use extended response, but what that means for each teacher is unclear and could be extremely variable from teacher to teacher and subject to subject. "Extended response" could be used as a blanket term to cover any type of writing done that is more than a few sentences. Some of the assignments teachers submitted for analysis may require an extended response even though none of them clearly stated that. Without surveying individual teachers and having them clearly explain what they consider extended response, it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions from the extensive use of extended responses.

One question asked teachers if students completed writing someone in their field would, and the next question asked if students completed technical writing in that field. The split was either that students did write what someone in the field would and they completed technical writing, or they wrote what someone in the field would but did not complete technical writing. Part of the reason for this could be the lack of a shared
understanding of what technical writing is. Teachers in Career and Technical Education (CTE) would most likely have a clear understanding of technical writing because that is much of what their students do whereas a teacher in a core academic class (math, science, English) may not have such a clear understanding.

Teachers all agreed that technical writing is important, but five teachers answered that students do not complete technical writing in their classes even though they write for the field. This possibly shows a disconnect between what teachers know to be beneficial and what they are actually having students do in class. The other possibility is that, while teachers believe technical writing is beneficial, they may not believe that their classroom is the place for it. It could be that the classes are more academic and thus technical writing is not something they think of students doing or that writing is just not something normally done in that subject at the high school level, such as writing a response in physical education. Another possibility for the discrepancy is that the teachers see the benefits of technical writing but do not know how to get students to write technically for the field. In any case, educating teachers on what technical writing is and how that would look in all fields may be a benefit since all the teachers surveyed agreed on the importance of technical writing.

**Implications for Future Research**

The study left some areas for future study. The area that could use the most investigation is the survey results. For the survey itself, because I did not ask for specific information about subjects taught, there remain many questions from the results. Did teachers believe technical writing important but not relevant to their subject? Do professionals working in that field typically not write? How much do teachers really
know about the actual type of writing being done by professionals in their field? All of these questions are areas that need further investigation to understand teacher perception of writing in their classes.

The question on the survey that asked participants if students completed technical writing in their classes should be revised because it did not accomplish what I was hoping it would. The question could be broadened to include professional writing also or just changed to professional writing instead of technical. Changing the question would have garnered different responses which might have been more on track with my expectations. The definition of technical writing given in the survey was very narrow. This meant that core subject teachers, who are more likely to see themselves using professional writing in their classes, would answer that they do not do technical writing even though they may be completing writing someone in their field would. The other option is to add a separate question about professional writing that is similar to the technical writing question. It would also have been more beneficial to know what subjects survey participants taught. Without knowing what subjects each teacher is referencing, it is difficult to draw a definite conclusion about the technical writing responses. Knowing the subject participants taught would help draw better conclusions as to why technical writing possibly was not being taught.

**Conclusion**

The end results of this study showed me that teachers believe technical writing to be important and beneficial, even if they do not assign it themselves. Also, students are asked to complete many different types of writing assignments, but not all assignments have clear explanation on how to respond or what the written response should look like.
Teachers also do not make the purpose of the writing clear to students as much as would be beneficial. The benefit to students completing many different writing assignments is that this gives them many different antecedent genres they can pull from later in their lives. Focusing on educating students on genre awareness will give them the ability to see how the writing assignments they have completed in school can be used as a basis for other writing they encounter in other facets of their lives.

The creation of a specific technical writing class draws together the importance of technical writing that all teachers agreed upon with clearly focused and explained writing assignments that make purposes to students clear. Students are exposed to many different types of writing but seem to be lacking any sort of analysis in terms of those writings. They are asked to write and then move on to other assignments. Adding in genre awareness will allow them to work more confidently on various writing assignments without teachers having to spend extensive time explaining how to write the genre to students. The school would benefit from adding a writing class that focuses on analyzing genres and writing those genres, especially with the school requiring writing in all subjects. Students learning how to analyze genres in general will benefit all subjects at the high school because teachers will be able to teach their content and hopefully get better written product from students in individual subjects. The writing students are completing will be relevant and applicable to their future lives, whether in the workforce or in college.
Chapter 3: Professional and Technical Writing Class

After analyzing the data on classes taught at Marken High School, the need for a professional and technical writing class became clear. Teachers found technical writing to be important, but students were not consistently getting the same types of exposure to professional and technical writing. Either students were completing something that could be seen as technical writing, or they were writing for the sheer purpose of writing with no larger audience or context in mind. The created course works to remedy these issues and give students a clear understanding of why they are writing what they are and to think through audience and purpose when writing.

Students know they are being asked to write, but without a clear direction, students struggle to connect “school writing” to writing done outside the school setting. This is concerning because, as Bush and Zuidema explain, “professional writing concepts tie in closely to best practices in teaching writing and are well-supported by the nascent Common Core State Standards” (“Designing A High School” 94). If teachers know that professional and technical writing is important and the Common Core Standards seemingly agree, there remains a gap in what students should be learning that will benefit them on a larger scale than just in high school.

This is where the creation of a professional and technical writing class became necessary. If none of the classes currently being taught at the school were really meeting needs of students in terms of professional and technical writing, the only sure way to ensure students were receiving the same sorts of instruction with professional and technical writing was through the creation of a new class. Students learn multiple genres that appear in many different fields in the professional world. Genres studied go from
letters to reports to proposals. Learning about, analyzing, and writing multiple genres
gives students a large number of antecedent genres they will be able to pull from after
high school, either in college or the workforce. Students work individually and
collaboratively to create genre samples of worth that accomplish what the genre is meant
to. Revision is required, and students finish the course by creating their own project,
completing it, and presenting it to the class. The course works to not only offer students a
variety of professional and technical writing opportunities but to also scaffold the writing,
so it moves from teacher-centered to student-centered. To more fully explain all
components of the class, a justification of choices regarding the class follows.

**Justification**

The class has been designed as a senior-level English class. Students who
complete the year-long course will earn their fourth credit for English to meet graduation
requirements. At Marken High School, students at the senior level have different
electives they can choose from for their final year of English. This course is one of the
possible English electives students can take. The course is added to the existing course
options, so instead of replacing any current courses, it gives students another option for
English. The addition of a professional and technical writing class hopes to draw students
who struggle with literary analysis but will find benefit in learning to write for a
professional setting. The course is the entire year (36 weeks) with the work broken into
units that start with the teacher finding and supplying samples of different types of
writing in the first semester and then moves to students locating their own samples for
analysis in the second semester. All elements of the course are aligned with Common
Core State Standards and work to meet the requirements for informative reading and writing.

Units and Modules

Students will be starting the course by choosing the type of work they want to focus on for the duration of the year. They can choose either a career they believe they want to enter or a school subject they find interesting if they are unsure about a future career. All writing completed for the year will be geared towards that career or subject. Students will be learning different genres, but then when they go to actually write, they will be focusing their genre samples towards their chosen career or subject. In this way, students will be able to write about topics that interest them while still accomplishing what they need to for the course.

Overall, the genres of writing I selected while creating the course were structured to logically move from writing students might be familiar with to more complex writing that students had never completed. The course starts with learning what genre is and what genre analysis is. As Devitt writes in “Genre Pedagogies”, students learning genre awareness allows them to “write any genre better through tackling it not as a neutral set of required conventions but as meaningful social action” (153). Students typically do not learn why they write the way they do. They just complete the writing and move on. The course starts with them learning to think through and analyze why they make the choices they do. This is accomplished through students learning how to apply genre awareness to the genres they will study. To introduce them to genre analysis and thinking analytically about a genre, students will start by focusing on the genre of the movie review. For most students, they are familiar with this genre and have experience reading it. Now they will
be asked to look at it analytically and think more about why certain choices are made in terms of form and content.

After learning about genre and genre analysis, students will be applying genre analysis to a text with which they are very familiar: the textbook. Since starting formal education, students have read and learned from textbooks, but now they will be asked to analyze textbooks for purpose, audience, and form. Choosing a text they are familiar with will allow them to focus on analyzing the form and be less concerned about understanding the content. With their later writings, genre considerations and content will both be important, but focusing just on genre awareness initially will allow them to start to develop a clearer understanding of genre. For students to show their understanding of genre, they will complete an abbreviated genre analysis response that asks them to explain their genre findings about the textbook they analyzed. The focus here is on students explaining what they have learned about the genre of the textbook and explain how their textbook does and does not meet what they consider to be the genre characteristics of a textbook.

The overall focus for the second unit is writing for various audiences. Students traditionally write for the teacher as audience because another one is never defined for them. The issue here is that students have not ever been taught how to change what they write based on who they are writing it for. The first unit teaches them to analyze a genre to understand who the audience is and how something is geared towards that audience. Then the second unit asks them to start writing with those different audiences in mind. The initial module is something students may be familiar with, the job description, but then the other modules are probably new to them. While the unit overall deals with
audience, it is broken down into individual modules or genres. Students will analyze each
genre and then write the genre with a focus on audience and writing to that audience.

Each module focuses on a different genre that students may reasonably be
exposed to in their professional lives. To get a job, students need to be able to read and
understand what a job description is asking of applicants. Then they need to know how to
respond to that description with something other than a resume. This is why the letter
genre is the next focus. Students will learn how to write a letter for employment purposes
and how that letter changes when the audience changes from prospective employer to
current employer or coworker. They will also learn the differences between a letter of
inquiry and a letter of request. This will allow all students to write the letter genre using a
form that logically fits with their focus.

The next module seems like an odd choice but is actually something many
students can benefit from in the long run. Any more, the business world is a global world
and when individuals advance in that world, there is the potential for extensive travel.
Sometimes these trips will be planned for employees, but at other times the employee has
to plan a business trip. Having students analyze and then create itineraries asks them to
do quite a bit of research, make judgment calls about everything associated with a trip,
and put all that information together into an easy-to-follow format to give to someone for
approval. Students will start by analyzing itineraries to learn the different parts of an
itinerary and what goes into the genre. Then they are making a general itinerary to a
location for 3-4 days. From that general itinerary, they will create an itinerary for a
business sales trip to the same location for the same number of days. The focus is for
them to plan everything that would need to be included for a business trip. Then students
will change the audience for the itinerary from a business setting to a family setting. The location and time frame will remain the same, but the change in audience will require students to think differently about what should be in their itineraries.

The final writing for the first half of the year is a genre analysis essay. This will allow students to show, through analytical writing, what they have learned in terms of genre analysis. Students will select their own genre to study that we have not studied as a class. Then they will find samples, breakdown those samples, and write an essay that analyzes the genre. This is much more of a traditional English essay than they are used to, but the focus is still on genre analysis. Students may approach this any way they would like, but the easiest method would probably be to write an essay that follows the “Questions to Consider when Analyzing a Genre” handout. Students also have the option of choosing any genre they find interesting, so they can work on something directly related to their chosen career or subject. This caps off what students should have learned in the first semester before getting into the project writing unit.

The entire second half of the course focuses on writing that would be done for a project in a workplace. It starts with the report genre and focuses in specifically on observation and incident reports. Technical writing focuses on being descriptive and specific with what is seen and meant. This is not the type of writing students are used to doing, especially in an English class. This is the reason that the unit starts with students practicing writing descriptively. They need to be able to accurately write what they are seeing and what they mean. This then leads into the report genre, especially the observation type of report. Students will find samples of reports on their own and work to analyze the genre to be able to write a report of their own. Just like before, students will
be able to choose between an observation report or an incident report, depending on what would be most commonly used in their career or field.

From the report genre, the course moves to the product comparison genre. This logically makes sense after the report genre because being descriptive and precise is important when comparing products to determine the best fit for an individual’s needs. Students will analyze product comparisons to determine what constitutes the genre. Then they will be selecting a product relevant to their field and completing a product comparison. This will be done digitally to make it easier for students to incorporate images for the product. Students will also choose a model of the product to suggest to the company for purchase and write a letter explaining why that is the best option.

Instruction genre and process explanation genre belong together because of the purpose of the process explanation genre which is to help someone understand what is being done. Instructions are the step-by-step of how to do it. Both genres are necessary writing because students will most likely be exposed to both types of writing in their lives. Starting with students writing instructions for a process helps them more clearly understand the difference between instructions and process explanations. They will then be writing a process explanation of the instructions they create. Because audience and purpose play such important roles in relation to genre, this will make the shifts in audience and purpose clearer to students if they are writing in terms of their own instructions.

The final genres students will focus on are proposals and action plans. Students will be finishing the course by creating their own project and then working to complete and present it. Students will be studying project proposals and then using that information
to create their own proposal. They will also study action plans and create an action plan for completion of their project. This is a culminating activity that asks students to take all the writing we have learned about and practiced into account to create a project in their chosen field that illustrates their ability to communicate in different genres.

**Writing Assignments and Projects**

For each module studied, students will be asked to write the genre we focused on at that time. This shows they can not only analyze a genre, but they also understand the analysis and genre enough to actually write a sample of that genre. Being able to create the genre involves full understanding of purpose, audience, and form in addition to understanding word choice and connotations/meanings of words along with technical terminology where required. Any time students write a genre sample, it will focus on something within the career or subject students chose to study at the beginning of the year. In this way, even though students are completing the same type of assignment, they are able to focus on an area they find interest in. This is especially important because students will most likely be more engaged to complete their work successfully if they can study something they find interesting.

A general aspect of all writing assignments is that students will be required to revise all major work. This includes any time they are creating a sample of the genre they are learning. In an actual workplace, individuals normally have to fix writing until it is what a boss is asking for. To make this idea clear for students, they will be required to revise writings they submit. A first revision is required for all final draft assignments. The first revision will be done with peer collaboration with groups of students working to improve each individual assignment together. As students get more familiar with genre
and writing genre, the revision assistance will go from collaborative to peer review. After the first required revision, students may revise up to another two times to earn the highest possible grade they can and create the best writing they can. This means that students may be revising assignments even after the class has moved on to another genre. Students may revise up to a month after the final draft was due.

Initially, students will probably find this idea strange because they traditionally do not revise continually or, if they do revise, it is once and then they submit a final draft and move on to something else. They need to understand that simply completing an assignment does not mean it meets the necessary requirements or that it is done at an acceptable level. Requiring revision is one move to make the course as similar to an actual workplace as possible.

Another requirement that will help connect to the workplace setting is requiring students to present some of what they are working on. In one instance, they will be defending the letter of inquiry or request they write. This helps them understand that just requesting something in a workplace may not be enough. They need to be able to defend why they are asking for something. They will also be presenting their final projects they create to finish the course. This relates to a long-term project completed in a workplace that is then presented to a boss or a board. They need to take audience into consideration and really know what they are talking about to be able to answer any questions about the project.

For many of the assignments, after students write a sample of the genre, they will be asked to justify how their sample fits the genre. This is treated as a self-check for students before submitting a final draft to the teacher. Students need to learn to double-
check their own work and make sure they are doing what they claim to be. Requiring a justification forces students to analytically look at their own writing and determine where there are errors or simple omissions. Then, they can use this check to revise their work before final submission. This will hopefully also cut down on the amount of revision students will be completing. If they are taking the time to check their own work first, the revisions they are required to make should be minimal or mostly focused on grammatical issues. The justification will take the form of a reflection. Before completing the first justification, the class will discuss the genre of the reflection and establish what will be required for the justification.

Rubrics are used to score all submitted assignments along with the presentations students will give. Some aspects of the rubrics are repeated, dealing with audience awareness, grammar and ease of reading, but the rest of each rubric is geared towards the genre being studied. Students are given the rubric at the same time the genre is being studied, so they are fully aware of how they are being graded while they are working. For the final project, part of the requirement is for students to explain how they should be scored. There are some clear requirements for the class as a whole, such as the number of writings they must include in their final project along with weekly work log checks. Otherwise, the actual grading for the final project depends on what the final project is and what career or subject the individual student chose to focus on.

**Conclusion**

My thesis overall worked to explain how students learning professional and technical writing in high school can have long-lasting benefits to their lives in their education and after their formal education has ended. Teaching students genre awareness
gives them the skills they need to analyze any genre they encounter in their lives and know how to respond or write effectively for that genre. Learning genre awareness in the setting of an English classroom allows there to not only be focus on the genre but also on creating clear, grammatically-correct writing. The created course incorporates all those elements. It moves from teacher-centered, explicit genre teaching to student-focused genre analysis. It asks students to not only analyze the genre samples but then to analyze their writing according to genre characteristics they determine.

The course is created to be continually reflective for students to work through how to revise writing effectively and create something that accomplishes what the genre is supposed to accomplish. They will complete writing that someone in their chosen field would, meaning they are already being exposed to a discourse community for that field, even if it is on a small scale.

In the survey, all teachers who completed the survey agreed that students learning technical writing would be beneficial for various reasons, but most of them focused on the idea that it would benefit the futures of students. Students who take this course will see that professional and technical writing is much more than a resume or a report. All fields and all businesses have professional and/or technical writing, and it benefits their futures to learn how to analyze that writing.

Completing the course gives students the larger perspective on life outside of their high school education by giving them a glimpse into the types of writing they may be completing some day in their careers or into their post-secondary educations. They learn how to analyze any type of text they encounter and how to respond effectively. This will give them an advantage over other students whom have solely focused on literary
analysis for their English classes and have not learned how to analyze informational texts. Being able to read and analyze any genre is a skill that will benefit them in every avenue of their lives. Overall, students have an opportunity to show they are prepared for life after graduation because they have learned how to think critically and write effectively.
Professional and Technical Writing Course

Grade: Senior

Time frame: Year-long course (36 weeks)

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Use knowledge of genre analysis to understand and reproduce different types of genre
- Present information effectively for varying purposes
- Work in small groups to achieve a shared goal
- Compose genres for varying audiences and purposes
- Revise and edit documents for clarity of content and ideas

Units and Modules
- Introduction of Genre
  - What is genre?
  - Textbook analysis
- Writing for Various Audiences
  - Job description
  - Letter of inquiry/request
  - Itinerary
  - Genre Analysis Essay
- Project Writing
  - Observation (incident) report
  - Product comparison
  - Instructions
  - Process explanation (written and presented)
  - Proposal/action plan

Unit 1: Introduction of Genre
Objectives:
- Learn and recall what a genre is
- Identify characteristics of a genre, including form, purpose, and audience
- Compare samples of a genre to identify characteristics for that genre
- Analyze genre as a whole class, small group, and individually
- Compose samples of learned genres
- Apply knowledge of genre analysis to identify genre characteristics of a textbook
- Identify purpose and audience of textbook
- Discuss analysis with a small group and work to create shared qualities of genre
- Write a genre analysis on the textbook
- Revise and edit to produce clear, grammatically correct writing

Standards:
- R1.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an
author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a
text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

- W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex
  ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective
  selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development,
  organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.11-12.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising,
  editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most
  significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative
  discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on
  grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing
  their own clearly and persuasively.
- L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English
  grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- L.11-12.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English
  capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Time frame: 6 weeks

Module 1: What is genre?

Week 1: Intro genre
1. Introduce definition of genre and work to create a shared definition
2. Introduce definition of audience and identify audiences for familiar genres
3. Introduce idea of genre analysis and work on analyzing a familiar genre, such as
   movie reviews

Week 2: Genre Analysis
1. Finish genre analysis with movie reviews
2. With a partner, analyze genre using 2 movie reviews, looking for genre
   characteristics
3. Choose 1 movie review, analyze it for genre characteristics, and compose genre of
   movie review

Week 3: Compose genre
1. Finish composing movie review
2. Peer collaboration for genre characteristics
3. Revise and edit to create clear, grammatically correct writing

Module 2: Textbook analysis

Week 4: Analyze textbook
1. Select textbook and apply genre analysis to understand function and composition
   of a textbook
2. Identify the purpose and audience for the selected textbook
3. Share discoveries with small group to identify shared genre qualities
Week 5: Write genre analysis
1. Using shared genre characteristics of form, purpose, and audience, write a genre analysis that identifies how the textbook follows genre norms and deviates from those norms

Week 6: Revise/edit genre analysis
2. Revise and edit to create clear, grammatically correct writing

Unit 2: Writing for Various Audiences
Objectives:
- Analyze job descriptions to learn the components of the job description genre
- Use genre analysis to evaluate a job description
- Apply knowledge of genre analysis to understand the form, purpose, and audience of an unfamiliar genre (letter and itinerary)
- Identify similarities and differences between different types of letters
- Compose a letter of either inquiry or request
- Respond verbally to a question about the written letter
- Modify genre content for different audiences
- Create itineraries for various purposes and audiences (business and pleasure)
- Justify how changes to content apply to different audiences
- Compose a genre analysis essay
- Revise and edit to produce clear, grammatically correct writing

Standards:
- R.I.11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- R.I.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
- W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.11-12.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
- L.11-12.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- SL.11-12.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Timeframe: 13 weeks

Module 1: Job Description
Week 1: Analyze genre
1. Work with a partner to analyze 5 samples of job descriptions
2. Write an informal description of the job description genre

Week 2: Response to genre
1. Select 1 job description and individually analyze it against the created description
2. Write how to respond effectively to the selected job description

Module 2: Letter of Inquiry or Request
Week 3: Analyze letters of inquiry and request
1. Analyze 3 letters of inquiry and 3 letters of request
2. Create a list of genre characteristics for a letter
3. Narrow down genre for a letter of inquiry versus a letter of request to understand the differences

Week 4: Compose a letter
1. Choose to compose either a letter of inquiry or a letter of request
2. Compose a letter, following genre characteristics

Week 5: Modify letter for different audiences
1. Revise and edit to create clear, grammatically correct writing
2. Discuss different audiences for a letter
3. Revise letter to reflect the change of audience

Week 6: Finish modifying letter and Interview responses
1. Finish revising letter to reflect change of audience
2. Discuss what justification genre will look like for class
3. Justify how changes are appropriate for the change in audience
4. Defend letter when interviewed about its contents and purpose

Module 3: Itinerary
Week 7: Analyze genre of itinerary
1. Analyze various types of itineraries for genre characteristics
2. Create list of itinerary genre characteristics

Week 8: Create general itinerary for travel
1. Choose destination and time frame (3-4 days)
2. Create general itinerary for a trip to the location and for the time frame
3. Justify how itinerary fits in the itinerary genre

**Week 9: Modify itinerary for a business setting**
1. Using the previously created itinerary, modify it for the purpose of business (sales trip)
2. Justify how the changes are geared towards a business trip

**Week 10: Modify itinerary for a family setting (vacation)**
1. Using the original general itinerary, modify it for the purpose of a vacation
2. Justify how the changes are geared towards a vacation

**Module 4: Genre Analysis Essay**

**Week 11: Choose genre to analyze**
1. Select genre not yet studied to analyze
2. Find 4 samples of the genre
3. Analyze genre for genre characteristics

**Week 12: Write genre analysis essay**
1. Using the analysis, write an essay that explains the analysis of the genre

**Week 13: Revise and edit essay**
1. Revise and edit to produce clear, grammatically correct writing

**Unit 3: Project Writing**

**Objectives:**
- Analyze observation and incident reports to learn the components of the report genre
- Distinguish genre differences between observation reports and incident reports
- Write to describe an observation clearly and succinctly
- Compose an observation report
- Justify how the observation report meets genre of the report
- Analyze product comparisons to learn the components of the product comparison genre
- Apply knowledge of genre analysis to understand the form, purpose, and audience of an unfamiliar genre (report, product comparison, process explanation, and proposal/action plan)
- Create a digital product comparison
- Write a letter explaining which product model best meets the company needs
- Analyze samples of instructions to learn the components of the instruction genre
- Write instructions for a process
- Analyze samples of process explanations to learn the components of the process explanation genre
- Write a process explanation
- Justify how the process explanation meets the genre of the process explanation
- Analyze samples of project proposals and action plans to learn the components of the proposal and action plan genres
- Write a proposal for a culminating project for the year
- Create an action plan to complete the project
- Present findings from project

Standards:
- RI.11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).
- RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W.11-12.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Gradespecific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.11-12.5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- W.11-12.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.
- W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W.11-12.8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.
• SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
• SL.11-12.5 Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
• L.11-12.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
• L.11-12.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
• L.11-12.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
• L.11-12.6 Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Timeframe: 18 weeks

Module 1: Observation/Incident Report
 Week 1: Practice descriptive writing
   1. Discuss descriptive writing
   2. Practice writing descriptively by describing an object brought in by the teacher
   3. Revise description until approved as sufficient by the teacher

Week 2: Analyze report genre
   1. Evaluate genre characteristics of a report through genre analysis
   2. Create a genre description for a report

Week 3: Write an observation report
   1. Evaluate how observation reports and incident reports deviate from the general report genre form
   2. Write a report to recount an incident or describe an observation clearly and concisely

Week 4: Revise and edit report
   1. Revise and edit to produce clear, grammatically correct writing
   2. Justify how written report fits report genre

Module 2: Product Comparison
 Week 5: Analyze product comparison genre
1. Evaluate sample product comparisons to determine characteristics of the product comparison genre
2. Choose products to complete a product comparison on
3. Gather information needed to complete product comparison

**Week 6: Create digital product comparison**
1. Create digital product comparison that meets genre guidelines
2. Write letter explaining which product model is best for company and why
3. Revise and edit to create clear, grammatically correct writing

**Module 3: Instruction and Process Explanation**

**Week 7: Analyze instruction genre and write instructions**
1. Evaluate samples of instructions to determine the components of the instruction genre
2. Choose a process
3. Write instructions for the process that follow the genre guidelines
4. Revise and edit to create clear, grammatically correct writing

**Week 8: Analyze process explanation genre**
1. Evaluate samples of process explanations to determine the components of the process explanation genre
2. Write process explanation for instructions written previously

**Week 9: Revise, edit, and justify process explanation**
1. Finish writing process explanation
2. Revise and edit to produce clear, grammatically correct writing
3. Justify how written process explanation fits in the genre

**Module 4: Proposal and Action Plan**

**Week 10: Analyze project proposals and action plans**
1. Evaluate samples of project proposals and action plans to determine components of each genre

**Week 11: Write proposal and action plan**
1. Write a project proposal to propose a culminating project for the course
2. Create an action plan to complete the project

**Weeks 12 - 16: Work on project**
1. Work on completing project

**Weeks 17-18: Present project**
1. Present complete projects to the class
Questions to Consider When Analyzing a Genre

These questions are meant to be a guide for you to use any time you read an unfamiliar genre. We will be using it extensively, so keep track of this.

Setting
- Where does the genre normally appear?
- What medium (print, digital, other) is normally used?

Subject
- What topics use this genre?
- What businesses or professions use the genre?
- When this genre is used, what are people interacting about?

Participants (Who uses the genre?)

Writers
- Who writes the genre? Possibility for multiple writers?
- How do we know who the writer(s) is(are)?
- What roles do the writers perform?
- What characteristics do writers of this genre need to have?
- When or how do writers write the genre (under a crunch, in teams, on the computer)?

Readers
- Who reads the genre?
- Is there more than one type of reader?
- What roles do the readers perform?
- What characteristics do readers of this genre need to have?
- When do readers see and read the genre (waiting rooms, in passing, at leisure)?

Purposes
- When is the genre used and for what occasions?
- Why is the genre used?
- Why do writers write and readers read the genre?
- What purpose does the genre fulfill for people who read and use it?

Patterns
- What content is included normally and what is excluded? What counts as evidence?
- How are texts in the genre structured? What parts are there and how are they organized?
- What is the common layout or appearance? How long is a typical text in the genre?
- What types of sentences do the texts of the genre use? Long/short? Simple/complex? Are sentences varied?
- What types of words are most common? Is jargon used? Slang?
Revision Requirement

The focus of this course is to have you complete writing related to a field you find interesting that helps you see the types of writing someone in your field would complete. To make this connection to your future clearer, revision will be required.

In the world after your formal education, you will learn that just completing something does not mean you are actually done with it. You have to produce something of quality that achieves what your boss is actually looking for. This means revision is a necessity. The purpose of requiring revisions is not only for you to improve what you have written but also to teach you how to revise effectively and thoroughly.

To achieve these purposes, this is what constitutes a substantial revision: You re-see, re-conceptualize, and re-attack what you did. You may have to change the tone, layout, organization, appeal to audience, and so on. You need to think about the strengths in the writing along with the areas of uncertainty or lack of clarity for a reader.

Grades for the final revision will be averaged with the grade for the first submission. The first revision will be required. After that, you may revise up to another 2 times to improve what you have written and your grade accordingly. If you do not complete a revision, a 0 is averaged into the grade.

Any final revisions are due a month after the initial due date. If you choose to wait too long, there is a chance you won’t get the revision done effectively and would thus give yourself a 0 for it. Work efficiently and manage your time wisely.

Other considerations:
- If you earn an A the first time, you do not have to revise.
- Only fixing errors in the original (with no major revision otherwise) will result in the highest possible revision grade of a D.
- Only making cosmetic changes with no major revision to content otherwise will result in the highest possible revision grade of a C.
- Revisions MUST be submitted with the original or the most recent draft. This way, I can easily see the changes you made. Revisions without the previous version will result in a 0 for the revision.
**Movie Review Assignment**

After analyzing movie reviews to understand the genre, you will be writing your own movie review. Choose a movie you are very familiar with (this should make it easier) and then craft a review that follows genre requirements. Remember how important audience and purpose are in terms of genre. Your grade will be based on meeting genre characteristics along with having clean, grammatically correct writing. Revision requirement applies.

**Movie Review Holistic Grading**

A movie review is meant to give readers a sense of what a movie is about along with the positives and negatives of the film, actors, writers, etc. The criteria for an effective movie review are as follows: 1) Organized to go from movie overall to specific elements (actors, plot, engagement); 2) Includes a recommendation; 3) Uses opinionated, descriptive language when describing and discussing the film that shows audience awareness; and 4) Is clear and easily readable with few grammatical errors.

5  A 5 meets all of the criteria. For a movie review to earn a 5, it is clearly organized with a statement of overall purpose/opinion along with describing the movie overall along with specific elements that make it clear why the opinion is what it is. It includes a clear recommendation at the end to readers and potential viewers of the film. Language used is highly descriptive, and the opinion is clear through the language used. The writer is aware of audience through description and word choice used. The review is easily read and has few to no grammatical errors that interfere with reading flow.

4  A 4 is still good but is lacking in 1 area. Possibly the organization is not logical or does not move from movie overall to specific elements. The recommendation is not clearly stated or is not located at the end of the review. The language used is passive and/or not descriptive when writing about the film. Writer attempts to address audience, but the audience is not obvious. The writing has some errors that affect reading flow, either because there are grammatical/spelling issues or language used is unclear.

3  A 3 has a strength in one area but is lacking in all other areas. One criteria is well done (good organization, recommendation clear, language descriptive, or easy to read) but all other areas are lacking. The writer generally understood the genre of the movie review but failed to fully meet genre requirements.

2  A 2 is lacking in all areas. The writer understood the components of the movie review genre but failed to execute any of them well. Organization is lacking or non-existent, recommendation is not clearly stated, language is not overly descriptive, and reading is a struggle due to grammar issues.

1  A 1 fails to meet all criteria for the movie review genre.
Textbook Genre Analysis
To help you start to understand purpose and audience in relation to genre, you will be choosing a textbook and analyzing it using the Questions to Consider handout. Once you have analyzed your textbook individually, you will be meeting with small groups to share what you discovered about your textbook. Through this sharing, your group will develop some genre characteristics that are shared with all textbooks.

After we establish textbook genre characteristics, you will be writing a response that explains your analysis of your textbook and how it fits in the textbook genre. This is not a full-blown essay, so organization is up to you. You need to have enough explanation that I can understand why you believe what you do about your textbook and the genre. Revision will NOT be required.
Checklist for Textbook Genre Breakdown
Use this checklist to double-check you have addressed all areas of the genre in your write-up. This is what will be used to score it.

Setting

- Normal use of genre
- Medium of genre

Subject

- Topics used
- Business or professional use
- Interactions used for

Writers

- Typical writer(s)
- Support for who writer(s) is(are)
- Role of writer(s)
- Writer(s) characteristics
- Reason/location for writing genre

Readers

- Typical reader
- Other types of readers
- Roles of readers
- Reader characteristics
- Reasons for reading/seeing genre

Purposes

- Genre use and occasion
- Reason for genre use
- Reason for writers to write and readers to read
- Purpose genre fulfills/meets

Patterns

- Content included/excluded, Constitutes evidence
- Structure of genre/parts and organization
- Layout/appearance, typical length
- Sentence types/characteristics
- Word types used
**Job Description Assignment**
The focus of this assignment is to get you thinking about how to respond to a genre. You are working to understand the genre and the intentions of the genre writer.

After analyzing some sample job descriptions and understanding the genre, you will be individually selecting a job description, analyzing it according to genre conventions, and then writing an effective response to the job description. The response should be to the prospective employer and show interest in the job while also taking into account what seems to be important based on the description. The focus here is that you keep audience in mind and respond to the major concerns or areas of importance to the writer of the genre. Also think about the situation for writing a response and what the purpose should be.

The grade is based on effectively responding to the job description with accurate word choice, awareness of audience needs, and easily-read text. You will submit the job description, your analysis of the job description, and your response to the job description. No revision needed.

**Letter of Inquiry/Request Genre**
After analyzing and understanding the letter genre, you will be choosing to write either a letter of inquiry or letter of request. Make sure you know the differences between them and choose the one most logical for your focus of study.

For either one, decide what you want to get information about, and then compose a letter that meets the letter genre requirements and achieves your desired purpose. The audience for your first letter is a coworker. For the second version of this letter, the audience will become a boss or employer. Make sure you are altering the letter for the change in audience. The purpose may remain the same, but there should be some vast changes that take place because of the change in audience. This will be a revision assignment, so work to create the best final draft you can before submitting to the teacher.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds standards</th>
<th>3 Fully meets</th>
<th>2 Mostly meets</th>
<th>1 Does not meet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose and required response</strong></td>
<td>Purpose and the desired response are stated clearly and directly while being engaging and respectful. Clear understanding of balance between directness and openness.</td>
<td>Purpose and desired response are stated. Purpose and instructions are clear.</td>
<td>Purpose and desired response is mostly clear. Reader may be a left with a few questions.</td>
<td>Purpose and desired response are not clearly stated and leave the reader questioning what to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Details and information</strong></td>
<td>Includes necessary details to meet inquiry/request. Details clearly stated and ample information provided for reader to respond correctly.</td>
<td>Details are included for the reader to respond to the inquiry/request.</td>
<td>Some details are included, but information is missing to aid the reader in responding.</td>
<td>Necessary details are missing; not enough information for reader to respond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format</strong></td>
<td>Fully and completely includes all aspects of the letter genre. Understanding of purpose of genre and organization are clearly evident.</td>
<td>All parts of the letter genre are included.</td>
<td>Most parts of the letter genre are included, but there may be something omitted.</td>
<td>Letter not formatted to the letter genre. Major issues with genre understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Language choice shows consideration to audience and purpose is stated strongly while maintaining a courteous tone.</td>
<td>Language choice is suitable to audience, and tone remains respectful throughout.</td>
<td>Some language choices are suitable, but tone is at times lacking the proper respect for the audience.</td>
<td>Language is overall not professional or not respectful to audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience Awareness</strong></td>
<td>Audience considerations are clearly evident with word choice and description included. Tone reflects knowledge of audience.</td>
<td>Audience is addressed and tone reflects knowledge of audience.</td>
<td>Audience is not clearly addressed and/or the tone reflects limited thought to audience.</td>
<td>No clear audience for letter. Tone does not show any thought to audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or letter format.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or letter format.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or letter format affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar, mechanics, and letter format greatly affect reading fluency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Itinerary Assignment

To help you understand more about how text changes for audience and for you to practice your research skills, you will be working on an itinerary.

After analyzing itineraries to learn about the genre, you will select a location in the United States you want to complete an itinerary for. The trip will be 4 days long. Your first itinerary will be a business trip. Then you will use that same location but alter it to be a family trip.

To be successful at this assignment, you must include all aspects of the itinerary genre along with clearly making changes to your itinerary based on the change in purpose and audience. Upon completion, you will also justify how your itineraries are geared toward a business trip and family trip. You have to fully understand the genre and the alterations you made to the genre for audience for your justification to be done well. Revision required.
## Itinerary Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds</th>
<th>3 Fully meets</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets</th>
<th>1 Does not meet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>All locations &amp; activities logically make sense with purpose of trip. Each item clearly serves a purpose to trip overall. Clear focus on audience.</td>
<td>Locations and activities included match purpose of trip. Audience considered.</td>
<td>Most locations and activities make sense, but at times purpose of an activity does not relate to trip. Some audience consideration.</td>
<td>Most locations and activities serve no purpose in relation trip. Audience not considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design</strong></td>
<td>Itinerary organized in a logical manner that makes locating information easy and everything is easy to understand. No chance of confusion by users.</td>
<td>Itinerary is organized and can be followed. Users can follow it.</td>
<td>Itinerary attempts a clean design, but some aspects of set-up make reading &amp; following difficult. Users have to work to understand.</td>
<td>Little to no organization in itinerary. Very confusing for user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel Details</strong></td>
<td>All travel details included with all times, locations, and contact information clearly listed. Travel times are clearly accounted for.</td>
<td>Travel details included, but specifics may not be consistently included. No clear account for travel times.</td>
<td>Major travel details are included but no specific details. Travel times not taken into consideration.</td>
<td>Almost no details for trip besides location and length of stay. No times accounted for at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format</strong></td>
<td>All conventions of the itinerary genre are clearly included and logically used. Audience clearly taken into account when planning and organizing trip.</td>
<td>Most genre conventions are used. Audience has been considered for the trip.</td>
<td>Some genre conventions are used, but obvious aspects not attempted/included. Inconsistent audience consideration.</td>
<td>No consideration of the itinerary genre. No concern for audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Genre Analysis Essay

This is the only formal English essay you will be writing for the year. For this essay, you are choosing a genre we have not studied yet. Then you are working to breakdown that genre and analyze it, much like we did for the textbook assignment. However, this one has an added component that will require you to analyze patterns in the situation and style of the genre. An explanation of that section is included below.

You will be locating at least 4 samples of your chosen genre. However, having a few more would most likely be beneficial to making sure you have a full view of the genre. Start by analyzing the samples according to the “Questions to Consider when Analyzing a Genre” handout.

After breaking down your samples and understanding the genre, you also need to consider the following:

- What do participants have to know or believe to understand or appreciate the genre?
- Who is invited into the genre and who is excluded?
- What roles for readers and writers does it encourage or discourage?
- What values, beliefs, goals, and assumptions are revealed through the genre’s patterns?
- How is the subject of the genre treated? What content is considered important or ignored?
- What actions does the genre help make possible? What actions does it make difficult?
- What attitude towards readers is implied? What attitude toward the world is implied?

You are not required to specifically and fully address each of the questions, but you do need to have clearly worked through an analysis of what your genre is doing on a larger scale.

This is organized into paragraphs with a clear introduction, body paragraphs that address the genre breakdown along with the above analysis questions, and a conclusion that sums up the importance of what you discovered. You are required to quote as necessary to help your audience (me) with understanding.

You will submit your essay and the samples you analyzed. Because it is the end of the quarter, this is not an assignment available for revision, so you need to make the final draft you submit the best you can. Ask if you need help or guidance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Genre Analysis Essay Rubric</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Exceeds standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Fully meets standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sometimes meets standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Does not meet standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Analysis & Synthesis**       |
| Provides convincing and relevant evidence to back up the claim; Synthesis of genre patterns is thorough and thoughtful. |
| Provides evidence to back up the claim; Synthesis of genre patterns is evident. |
| Provides evidence that attempts to back up claim; Synthesis of genre patterns is lacking in thoroughness. |
| Contains limited evidence related to claim; Little to no synthesis of genre patterns. |

| **Organization**               |
| Text has a structure and organization that is carefully crafted to support the claim. |
| Text has structure and organization that is aligned with claim. |
| Text attempts structure & organization to support position. |
| Text has limited structure & organization. |

| **Audience**                   |
| Text consistently addresses the audience's knowledge level of the genre. |
| Text considers the audience's knowledge level about the genre. |
| Text illustrates inconsistent awareness of audience's knowledge level. |
| Text lacks awareness of audience's knowledge level. |

| **Cohesion**                   |
| Text strategically uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text. The text explains the relationships between the claim & reasons as well as the evidence. |
| Text uses words, phrases, & clauses to link major sections of text. Text connects claim & reasons. |
| Text contains limited words, phrases, & clauses to link major sections of text. Text attempts to connect claim & reasons. |
| Text contains few, if any, words, phrases, & clauses to link major sections of text. Text does not connect the claims & reasons. |

| **Conventions**                |
| Text presents an engaging, formal and objective tone. Text intentionally uses standard conventions of usage & mechanics. |
| Text presents formal tone. Text demonstrates standard conventions of usage & mechanics. |
| Text illustrates limited awareness of formal tone. Text demonstrates some accuracy in standard conventions of usage & mechanics. |
| Text illustrates limited awareness of or inconsistent tone. Text demonstrates inaccuracy in standard conventions of usage & mechanics. |
**Report Assignment**

After practicing descriptive writing and analyzing samples of a report, you will be writing either an observation report or an incident report. You need to choose the one that would be more relevant based on your focus for the course. You can either write the observation report about an actual object relevant to your field or you can create a situation for the incident report. In either case, you need to make sure you writing a report that fulfills the purpose you are claiming it does. Also consider your audience’s needs for either report. Each report serves a different purpose, so you need to make sure that purpose is clearly defined with the words you choose and what is included.

You will be justifying how your writing fits the report genre, so make sure you are working to understand genre components and then writing your report with those components in mind. This is a revision assignment, so try your best the first time around. See me if you need help.
Observation Report Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds</th>
<th>3 Fully meets</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets</th>
<th>1 Does not meet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates excellent writing style that includes objective language,</td>
<td>Demonstrates writing style that attempts objective language, choosing</td>
<td>Demonstrates writing style that lacks two of the following: objective language,</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor writing style and lacks objective language, effective word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>effective word choices, &amp; a professional tone.</td>
<td>effective words, and/or professional tone.</td>
<td>effective word choice, or professional tone.</td>
<td>word choice, and a professional tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Accurately follows report genre guidelines; Report can be easily followed &amp; understood.</td>
<td>Follows report genre guidelines; Report can be understood.</td>
<td>Attempts to follow genre guidelines, but some aspects missing or unclear. Reader must work to understand report.</td>
<td>Does not attempt to complete report according to genre guidelines; Report cannot be understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>Includes clear, accurate, detailed description recounting what was observed.</td>
<td>Includes description of what was observed.</td>
<td>Attempts to describe observation, but overall lacking.</td>
<td>Description lacks so much detail observation is challenging to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Offers insightful analysis as to importance of observation.</td>
<td>Offers explanation to importance of observation.</td>
<td>Offers some explanation of importance, but analysis is lacking.</td>
<td>Does not discuss or analyze importance of observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Writing illustrates clear understanding of audience needs &amp; works to address any confusion.</td>
<td>Writing illustrates awareness of audience.</td>
<td>Attempts audience awareness, but lacking in clearly addressing audience needs.</td>
<td>No attempt made to consider audience or aid audience in understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Incident Report Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds standards</th>
<th>3 Fully meets standards</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets standards</th>
<th>1 Does not meet standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates excellent writing style that includes objective language, effective word choices, and a professional tone.</td>
<td>Demonstrates writing style that attempts objective language, choosing effective words, and/or a professional tone.</td>
<td>Demonstrates style lacking two of the following: objective language, effective word choice, or professional tone.</td>
<td>Demonstrates poor writing style and lacks objective language, effective word choice, &amp; professional tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Accurately follows report genre guidelines with clearly organized sections; Report can be easily followed and understood.</td>
<td>Follows report genre guidelines; Report can be understood.</td>
<td>Attempts to follow genre guidelines, but some aspects missing/unclear. Reader must work to understand report.</td>
<td>Does not attempt to complete report according to genre guidelines; Report cannot be understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>Info presented in chronological sequence, with events described in clear, logical manner.</td>
<td>Info is presented sequentially with some description of events.</td>
<td>Info either not presented sequentially or events not described in logical manner.</td>
<td>Info lacks so much organization incident is difficult to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Corrective Action</strong></td>
<td>Includes two possible corrective actions &amp; both could be applicable.</td>
<td>Includes either only 1 or 2 corrective actions with 1 applicable.</td>
<td>Includes only 1 corrective action that is not applicable.</td>
<td>Does not include any corrective action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Writing illustrates clear understanding of audience needs &amp; works to address any confusion audience may have.</td>
<td>Writing illustrates awareness of audience.</td>
<td>Attempts audience awareness, but lacking in clearly addressing audience needs.</td>
<td>No attempt made to consider audience or aid audience in understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading fluency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Product Comparison Assignment

For this assignment, you will be analyzing product comparisons to understand the genre. Then you will be selecting a general product you want to complete a comparison on. The product could be something in your field of study for the semester, or it could just be a product you want to know more about. Instead of choosing a large product, like a car, you may want to go smaller scale, like a kitchen faucet, but I am leaving that up to you. Generally, the larger or more technical the product, the more components there are to compare.

Focus of this assignment is on your ability to gather information from multiple sources and then condense that information into an easy-to-understand format. The audience for this genre is going to be a possible consumer of the product, so you need to think about what your audience’s needs are to create this effectively. This process is something done in many different fields, so this should be something you eventually find very beneficial in your future.

Once you are done comparing the different models and choices and condensing that into a comparison chart, you will write a letter of request to your employer explaining why one specific model is the best fit for the company. This may be because of cost, but it could be because of quality or duration of use. You will have to make that decision and explain that in your letter. This is a revision assignment for both the product comparison and the letter, so make sure you are looking back at the letter genre to get that right. Let me know if you need help.
Product Comparison Grading
A product comparison is meant to give consumers an easy-to-understand format that allows for comparison of products. The criteria for an effective product comparison are as follows: 1) Organized for easy comparison; 2) Includes features most relevant to the product; 3) Has visual appeal; 4) Is clear and easily understood with few grammatical errors.

5 A 5 meets all of the criteria. For a product comparison to earn a 5, all information is clearly organized and easy to follow for comparisons. Features included are most relevant and important to the product and include what would be most important to the consumer. The comparison is visually appealing with clean lines, easy-to-see images, and obvious attention to detail. The way information is listed is consistent throughout, and there are few to no grammatical errors that interfere with understanding.

4 A 4 is still good but is lacking in 1 area. Possibly the features included are not the most important to a consumer or the features don’t seem relevant. There is a lack in visual appeal or attention to detail. Information is listed but is not consistent throughout. The writing has some errors that affect reading flow, either because there are grammatical/spelling issues or language used is unclear.

3 A 3 has a strength in one areas but is lacking in all other areas. One criteria is well done (good organization, relevant features, visually appealing, or easy to read) but all other areas are lacking. The writer generally understood the genre of the product comparison but failed to fully meet genre requirements.

2 A 2 is lacking in all areas. The writer understood the components of the product comparison genre but failed to execute any of them well. Comparisons are difficult to make because of lack of organization, features are not relevant to the product, there is little to no visual appeal, and reading is a struggle due to grammar issues.

1 A 1 fails to meet all criteria for the produce comparison genre.
**Instruction and Process Explanation Assignments**

This is actually two assignments with the process explanation piggy-backing off the instructions. A process explanation explains in general how something was done and why it was done that way whereas the instructions explain precisely how to do something.

To help you understand the differences between the two, instead of explaining someone else's instruction, you will be writing your own instructions and then writing up a process explanation afterward. Think of it in this way. The instructions are meant to be given to a coworker to complete a process while the process explanation is what goes to a boss to explain how the process is done generally and why it is done that way. Depending on your job some day, both types of writing may be essential to learn and understand.

You will start by analyzing instructions to learn the genre. Then you will choose a process and complete instructions for that process. After you are done, you will analyze sample process explanations to learn about that genre. Then you will write a process explanation for your instructions. It is important to choose a process you know well to make the instructions a little easier to write. Also, try not to choose something that has a large number of steps. Each step has to be accounted for, so this would include something like opening a jar of peanut butter and then closing it afterward to make a sandwich.

With that said, the choice of process is up to you. Run it by me for approval, but if it's something you think you can do, I'll probably let you do it. This is a revision assignment for both genres.
### Instructions Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds standards</th>
<th>3 Fully meets standards</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets standards</th>
<th>1 Does not meet standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Purpose is very clear and audience knows what they will be able to do after reading the document. Includes an introduction and table of contents.</td>
<td>Purpose is somewhat clear, but not outlined well for audience. May include a weak introduction and incomplete table of contents.</td>
<td>Purpose is not clear at all. Document just starts with instructions and no purpose clarification.</td>
<td>No attention to purpose of document.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Design / Organization</strong></td>
<td>Very well organized into major sections with clear labels and a table of contents.</td>
<td>Well-organized into major sections that are labeled.</td>
<td>Organized into sections.</td>
<td>Poorly organized or no clear organization at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Images</strong></td>
<td>Well-labeled pictures accompany instructions. Images make instructions clear and easy to follow.</td>
<td>Well-labeled pictures accompany the instructions.</td>
<td>Some pictures are included with instructions, but they are not clear, well-labeled, or connected to text.</td>
<td>No pictures are included in the instructions. The document includes text only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completeness</strong></td>
<td>Instructions include all necessary information and pictures, including any contact information for help or troubleshooting.</td>
<td>Instructions include information needed to complete the task.</td>
<td>Instructions may be missing some steps or the steps are not clear.</td>
<td>Instructions are incomplete and offer no help for the user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Instructions make it clear who should and should not use them and how they will meet audience's needs</td>
<td>Instructions include some audience reference and their needs for using these instructions.</td>
<td>Audience is not clear, and instructions seem very general and vague.</td>
<td>No attention to directing instructions to a specific audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading fluency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>4 Exceeds standards</td>
<td>3 Fully meets standards</td>
<td>2 Sometimes meets standards</td>
<td>1 Does not meet standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose is very clear and audience fully understands the process after reading the document.</td>
<td>Purpose is somewhat clear, but not outlined well for audience.</td>
<td>Purpose is not clear at all. Document just starts with explanation of steps.</td>
<td>No attention to purpose of document.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Paragraphs are clearly organized with logical purpose for each. Intro clearly establishes purpose and conclusion states importance.</td>
<td>Paragraphs are organized and there is an intro and conclusion.</td>
<td>Attempt is made to organize paragraphs logically, but overall no clear organization.</td>
<td>No attempt made to logically organize paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Steps are clearly explained with each purpose of the step made clear; Each step is related to the previous one.</td>
<td>Steps are explained and connected.</td>
<td>Attempt at explanation is made and/or steps are not connected.</td>
<td>Steps are briefly explained or not at all; No connection between steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Field-specific language is used as needed with explanation given where needed.</td>
<td>Some field-specific language is used with some explanation.</td>
<td>Field-specific language is used with no explanation.</td>
<td>No consideration has been given to language or word choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Writing illustrates clear understanding of audience needs and works to address any confusion audience may have.</td>
<td>Writing illustrates awareness of audience.</td>
<td>Attempts audience awareness, but lacking in clearly addressing audience needs.</td>
<td>No attempt made to consider audience or aid audience in understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventions</td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading fluency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project Proposal and Action Plan
As a culminating project for this course and to show what you have learned, you will be proposing a final project and creating an action plan to complete that project.

I am leaving what you want to do for the actual project up to you, but it needs to be something related to your field of study. You will start by analyzing the genres of project proposal and action plan to determine what you need to include in your proposal and action plan. Then you will propose a project of interest to you along with an action plan that lays out how you will complete your project in the four-five weeks you are being given to work. You MUST incorporate at least 3 types of writing we learned about in class this year other than the proposal and action plan. There will be weekly work checks while you work on your project.

After completing the project, you will present your project to the class, explaining not only what your project was but also reflecting on how it went and/or improvements you would make next time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Proposal Rubric</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Exceeds</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose/Need</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals, Objectives, Outcomes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Action Plan Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds</th>
<th>3 Fully meets</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets</th>
<th>1 Does not meet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>Plan clearly relates to project proposal and lays out what will happen clearly and concisely.</td>
<td>Plan relates to project proposal and lays out what will happen.</td>
<td>Some or general relation to project proposal. Briefly lays out what will happen.</td>
<td>Plan not related to project proposal. Does not lay out what will happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants</strong></td>
<td>Lists and includes all relevant participants. Makes clear who is responsible for what.</td>
<td>Lists relevant participants.</td>
<td>Some participants listed and/or not all clearly relevant.</td>
<td>No participants listed or ones listed are not related to project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>Timeline is realistic and includes all necessary steps.</td>
<td>Timeline is fully completed for steps.</td>
<td>Timeline is mostly completed.</td>
<td>No timeline or timeline is not completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Clearly explains what communication is needed and when. Provides checkpoints for participants.</td>
<td>Explains overall communication needed.</td>
<td>Explains some communication.</td>
<td>Does not explain needed communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Writing illustrates clear understanding of audience needs and works to address any confusion audience may have.</td>
<td>Writing illustrates awareness of audience.</td>
<td>Attempts audience awareness, but lacking in clearly addressing audience needs.</td>
<td>No attempt made to consider audience or aid audience in understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Few to no errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>A few minor errors in grammar and/or mechanics.</td>
<td>Errors in grammar and/or mechanics affect reading.</td>
<td>Major errors in grammar and/or mechanics greatly affect reading fluency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Presentation Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Exceeds</th>
<th>3 Fully meets</th>
<th>2 Sometimes meets</th>
<th>1 Does not meet</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepared &amp; Ease</strong></td>
<td>- completely prepared and rehearsed</td>
<td>- fairly prepared but needed more rehearsals</td>
<td>- somewhat prepared but clear rehearsal is lacking</td>
<td>- does not seem at all prepared</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- not read</td>
<td>- minimal use of written prompt</td>
<td>- mostly read</td>
<td>- all read</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarity &amp; Volume</strong></td>
<td>- speaks clearly &amp; distinctly all the time</td>
<td>- speaks clearly &amp; distinctly all the time</td>
<td>- speaks clearly/distinct most of time</td>
<td>- often mumbles or unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- no fillers</td>
<td>- fillers occasionally</td>
<td>- fillers often</td>
<td>- fillers are distraction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- volume loud enough for all to hear</td>
<td>- volume loud enough for most to hear</td>
<td>- volume not loud enough for most to hear</td>
<td>- volume too soft for most of audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Posture &amp; Eye Contact</strong></td>
<td>- stands up straight and looks relaxed</td>
<td>- stands up straight</td>
<td>- sometimes stands up straight</td>
<td>- slouches and/or no eye contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- eye contact with everyone</td>
<td>- eye contact with everyone</td>
<td>- sometimes makes eye contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content &amp; Focus</strong></td>
<td>- clear purpose &amp; subject</td>
<td>- clear purpose &amp; subject</td>
<td>- some defining purpose &amp; subject</td>
<td>- subject &amp; purpose not defined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- abundant examples, facts, stats</td>
<td>- relevant examples, facts, stats</td>
<td>- some examples, facts, stats</td>
<td>- weak or no support from examples, fact, /stats</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- clear support by evidence</td>
<td>- supported by evidence</td>
<td>- some support</td>
<td>- insufficient support of ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- ideas fully summarized</td>
<td>- ideas summarized</td>
<td>- need to refine summary or final idea</td>
<td>- major ideas unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- full understanding of speakers' position</td>
<td>- understanding of speakers' position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Aid</strong></td>
<td>- uses several visual aids that show considerable work &amp; enhance presentation</td>
<td>- uses a visual aid that shows some work &amp; improves presentation</td>
<td>- uses a visual aid for the presentation</td>
<td>- uses no visual aid or it detracts from presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Works Cited


Kapp, Rochelle and Bongi Bangeni. “‘I Was Just Never Exposed to This Argument Thing’: Using a Genre Approach to Teach Academic Writing to ESL Students in the Humanities.” *Genre Across the Curriculum*, edited by Anne Herrington and Charles Moran, Utah State UP, 2005, pp.109-27.


Millar, Diane. “Promoting Genre Awareness in the EFL Classroom.” *English Teaching Forum*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2011, pp. 2-15,


Appendix A

1. Please select the largest student population you taught in Spring 2017 and Fall 2017 from the options given. (Check all boxes that apply.)
2. How many formal writing assignments, on average, do you have students complete over the course of a semester?
3. In general, what types of writing (extended response, lab report, historical retelling, step-by-step instructions, etc.) do students complete for your classes? Please list the types of writing.
4. Do your students complete writing that someone in your field would write?
5. Technical writing is writing completed in and geared towards a specific field, so, for example, a construction manager creating a materials list. Do you feel students complete technical writing in your classes?
   a. Follow up to 5: If you answered yes to question 5, please explain what types of writing students complete that you would consider technical for your field.
6. Do you believe students would benefit from incorporating technical writing into their high school classes?
   a. Follow up to 6: If you answered yes to question 6, briefly explain why you believe students would benefit.
### Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education Writing Assignment</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic Paper</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing Skills Reading/Writing Assignment</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me in the Future</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank You Letter</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You Get to Join the Peace Corps!</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Professional (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free-Response Questions</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free-Response Questions</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“9-11”</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Academic (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare and Contrast Book and Movie with analysis</td>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Glass Castle Novel and Film Rubric</td>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Narrative Guide and Requirements</td>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/Community/National/World Issue</td>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>Academic writing but professional focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Development</td>
<td>Computer Programming</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flame Test Lab and Demo</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterile Techniques Lab Write-up</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNA Extraction Lab Report</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASA Opinion Essay</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather Project Written Report</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Academic/Professional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>