

Teaching Community Report English 70 - Fall 2004

Teaching Community Focus:

This English 70 teaching community focused on Student Learning Outcome B: Students will read to make meaningful connections, personally, socially, and academically. Since we focused on the teaching and learning of reading, we incorporated the Reading Apprenticeship model. To this end, we read *Reading for Understanding*, and every participant developed four lesson plans based on each dimension of the model. Our research question asked: How effectively are we teaching students to summarize and respond to short non-fiction readings? To answer the question, we gave students a pre and post reading to summarize and write a response.

TC Participants:

Eight instructors, each with one section, met for 12 hours over the semester.

TC Sessions:

During meetings we would discuss the text, *Reading for Understanding*, and then share lesson plans, assessment instruments, and student work, representing high, medium, and low. In addition to each participant developing lesson plans, everyone kept a “Teacher Rubric,” a type of a journal capturing our initial attempts at integrating a skill and moving from simply teaching a skill to embedding it into our class. Ideally, the teacher serves as a model to the apprentice, the student, whereby with less and less direction, the student begins to internalize the skills, and our journal helped us to see when we began to be less of a model as students became more practiced. Especially with teaching reading, we found that we would teach a discrete skill, move on, and then never return to the skill for reinforcement. The journal helped us to observe what we did well, and not so well. Lastly, the journal also was meant to capture those “teachable” moments that we encountered but did not want to document formally in a fully developed lesson plan.

Student Feedback:

We surveyed students at the end of the semester, asking them two major questions: 1) “This semester we used a variety of instructional methods in English 70. Rate each method as it relates to your learning process” and 2) “Rate your learning and development relative to the course’s four outcomes

Of all the reading instruction students experienced, the overwhelming majority felt that learning to annotate and summarize to be the most important. These were followed by class discussions, short lectures by instructor, learning to ask questions, writings in response to readings, instructor modeling reading, small group work, and lastly use of the computer classroom. In terms of the course’s four outcomes, students felt that they had most improved their ability to write essays incorporating reading and that they least improved in becoming engaged college students. However, students reported that they had improved in every aspect either “a lot of improvement” or “more than some improvement” by a combined total of at least 50% .

Faculty Feedback:

Benefits:

- Served as a foundation for the entire semester (Reading Apprenticeship)
- Shared lesson plans in order to think, reexamine, and reevaluate our teaching
- Allowed a chance to see theory in action
- Inspired by colleagues

Recommendations:

- More time meeting in teaching community meetings to review student work, to discuss assessment, to process after holistic scoring
- A teaching community below Eng. 70

Teaching and Learning Project: Assessment Report English 70 – Fall 2004

College Wide SLO's addressed/background information:

English 70 Student Learning Outcome B. Students will read to make meaningful connections, personally, socially, and academically. (For example: text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world.)

This English 70 teaching community focused on incorporating the Reading Apprenticeship model. To this end, we read *Reading for Understanding*, and each of us developed four lesson plans, one for each dimension of the model. Students were given a pre and post reading to summarize and to write a response.

Research Question:

How effectively are we teaching students to summarize and respond to short non-fiction readings?

Study design

Method: We conducted a pre and post matched pair design. During the first two weeks of the semester instructors administered a pre-test for students, using the essay "Gary Lee – From Speaking of Reading." Students were instructed to read, write a summary and a response. At the end of the semester, instructors administered a post-test whereby students read another essay about reading, "Debbi Fields", and wrote another summary and response.

Sample: Eight instructors, each with one section, met for 12 hours over the semester. We had a sample size of 120 students from these eight sections.

Scoring Technique: We used a holistic rubric for summary and response writings. We scored the pretests in October 2004 and the posttests in December 2004, using a matched pair design.

Description of Proficiency: Using an agreed upon rubric, we assessed students' work to be high, medium or low with proficient including all high and medium; not proficient included all low.

Results: At the beginning of the semester only 30% of students were considered proficient. By the end of the semester 75% of students were proficient.

Recommended actions:

- Recommend to Dept. On-going assessment of Eng. 70
- Share summary/response rubric
- Encourage all English 70 instructor to visit website to see sample lesson plans and student work
- Use "buddy-system" for informal staff development that emphasizes instruction that focuses on course outcomes