

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. (See TLP Assessment Report FA '04)

TC Participants:

Eight instructors, each with one section, met for 12 hours over the semester. (See Participating Faculty)

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