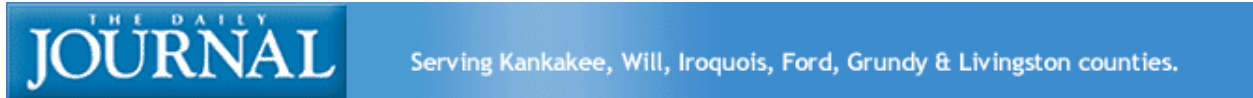


Teacher's Sample *Writing in the Works* Homework Three and Five

Homework Three

Summarize (restate facts) and respond (share opinion) to the story in your composition notebook. Write a mini-essay in paragraph form (three paragraphs: beginning, middle and end). This work prepares students to paraphrase fairly, avoid plagiarism and analyze sources.

(Illinois newspaper article)



He missed out reading to his kids

09/25/2009, 10:54 am

Pedro Hernandez has displayed a sense of curiosity, a main component of learning, and his tutor has taken notice.

Hernandez and his tutor, Michael A. Nelson, are currently inmates at the Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee. With Nelson's help, Hernandez is participating in the Adult Literacy Initiative Volunteers Expanded (ALIVE) tutoring program, which Kankakee Community College has introduced at the jail.

During a typical session, Hernandez huddles over a workbook, slowly reading sentences aloud while Nelson corrects his mispronunciations and explains words. "When I'm busy, he'll come up to me and say, 'What's this word?' He keeps coming to ask me about words in the book," Nelson said.

With Nelson's help, Hernandez is now reading at a third-grade level and recently finished John Grisham's suspense novel "The Chamber." This, he said, is a great source of pride. "When I get to really read something and understand it, I smile like a 3-year-old kid," he said.

And he thanks Nelson for the gift.

"I look at this man and I admire him and I look at him with a high level of respect," he said of Nelson.

Reading helps combat boredom while prisoners wait for their trials and sentences, and it's an effective means of behavior management, James Stevenson, the jail's Director of Inmate Programs, said.

Participation in ALIVE is viewed favorably by judges, but it won't decrease the sentences of most participants. However, a lighter sentence is not the reason most inmates participate, Stevenson said.

"It's a personal thing," Stevenson said. "As far as the tutors go, it's giving back, and as far as the students go, a lot of them want to be able to increase their literacy skills before they go back to their home."

As for Hernandez, his objective is to be able to read to his grandkids -- something he was unable to do with his five adult children, two of whom are in college.

He fights back tears as he speaks of regret.



By Leila Noelliste
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Photo: Michelle Gannon
Pedro Hernandez, an inmate at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, talks about how much learning to read means to him during a tutor session as part of the ALIVE literacy program, where inmates teach inmates to read. (09-16-09)
[More photos from this shoot](#)



Photo: Michelle Gannon
Pedro Hernandez, an inmate at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, talks about how much learning to read means to him during a tutor session as part of the ALIVE literacy program, where inmates teach inmates to read.
[More photos from this shoot](#)

"I missed out reading little booklets to my kids when they were young. It really hurts that I couldn't read with my kids," he said. "I hope my kids are proud."

mini-essay summarizing and analyzing the news article

Prisoners Voluntarily Read for Personal Gratification

With help from free online summaries like Cliff and Spark notes, students in high schools across the country may be blowing off their assigned reading, but inmates in the Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, are not. The local paper, *The Daily Journal*, visited the facility in September 2009 to learn more about the program Adult Literacy Initiative Volunteers Expanded (ALIVE), in which inmates tutor other inmates with help from Kankakee Community College. The college has found a way to connect higher education with community service.

Inmates Pedro Hernandez and Michael A. Nelson were profiled in "He missed out reading to his kids" by Leila Noelliste. According to the newspaper, Nelson is tutoring Hernandez, who bears "a sense of curiosity, a main component of learning." Inmates in ALIVE teach one another and learn to read for personal satisfaction, not in hopes of early release. The article does not comment on the crimes committed by the men and instead emphasizes the program's positive effects and the inmates' hopes for the future.

Hernandez, who was said to read at a third grade level, recently completed John Grisham's *The Chamber*, which evidently isn't demanding reading. An underlying truth emerges in the story: limited skill is required to read popular, pulp fiction. Still, Hernandez's accomplishment deserves praise and encouragement to inspire his continued growth. "When I get to really read something and understand it," the inmate, who is grandfather with two children in college, shared, "I smile like a 3-year-old kid." James Stevenson, the jail's Director of Inmate Programs, attributed the ALIVE reading program with positively affecting the prisoners' behavior while they serve their sentences and await release. If only students in high school would try some of the same medicine.

Works Cited:

Noelliste, Leila. "He missed out reading to his kids." *The Daily Journal*. Web. 25 Sept. 2009.

Homework Five:

Find an editorial. Analyze the thesis and support. Evaluate source. Prewrite in sentences and paragraphs. Write a response to the editorial you clip. Rebut the author or comment on the debate. Write a mini essay (three paragraphs: beginning, middle and end).

The Washington Post online
A Virtual Revolution Is Brewing for Colleges
By Zephyr Teachout
Sunday, September 13, 2009

Students starting school this year may be part of the last generation for which "going to college" means packing up, getting a dorm room and listening to tenured professors. Undergraduate education is on the verge of a radical reordering. Colleges, like newspapers, will be torn apart by new ways of sharing information enabled by the Internet. **(Thesis?) The business model that sustained private U.S. colleges cannot survive.**

(support) The real force for change is the market: Online classes are just cheaper to produce. Community colleges and for-profit education entrepreneurs are already experimenting with dorm-free, commute-free options. Distance-learning technology will keep improving. Innovators have yet to tap the potential of the aggregator to change the way students earn a degree, making the education business today look like the news biz circa 1999. And as major universities offer some core courses online, we'll see a cultural shift toward acceptance of what is still, in some circles, a "University of Phoenix" joke.

This doesn't just mean a different way of learning: The funding of academic research, the culture of the academy and the institution of tenure are all threatened.

(support) Both newspapers and universities have traditionally relied on selling hard-to-come-by information. Newspapers touted advertising space next to breaking news, but now that advertisers find their customers on Craigslist and Cars.com, the main source of reporters' pay is vanishing. Colleges also sell information, with a slightly different promise -- a degree, a better job and access to brilliant minds. As with newspapers, some of these features are now available elsewhere. A student can already access videotaped lectures, full courses and openly available syllabuses online. And in five or 10 years, the curious 18- (or 54-) year-old will be able to find dozens of quality online classes, complete with take-it-yourself tests, a bulletin board populated by other "students," and links to free academic literature.

But the demand for college isn't just about the yearning to learn -- it's also about the hope of getting a degree. Online qualifications cost a college less to provide. Schools don't need to rent the space, and the glut of doctoral students means they can pay instructors a fraction of the salary for a tenured professor, and assume that they will rely on shared syllabuses. Those savings translate into cheaper tuition, and even before the recession, there was substantial evidence of unmet demand for cheaper college degrees. Online degrees are already relatively inexpensive. And the price will only dive in coming decades, as more universities compete.

(support) You can already see significant innovation in online education at some community colleges and for-profit institutions. The community colleges are working with limited resources to maximize their offerings through Internet aggregation. For-profit institutions appear to be capitalizing on the high demand for low-cost degrees and the fact that few public schools do much traditional marketing.

These entrepreneurs are a little like the early online news sharers -- bloggers, contributors to mailing lists and bulletin boards, profit seekers, tinkers. (support) Just as the new model of news separated "the article" from "the newspaper," the new model of college will separate "the class" from "the college." Classes are increasingly taken credit by credit, instead of in bulk -- just as news is now read article by article.

(support) Of course, a cultural shift will be required before employers greet online degrees without skepticism. But all the elements are in place for that shift. Major universities are teaching a few of their courses online. And the young students of tomorrow will be growing up in an on-demand, personalized world, in which the notion of a set-term, offline, prepackaged education will seem anachronistic.

Taking the newspaper analogy one step further, college aggregators will be the hub of the new school experience. In the world of news, the aggregators have taken over from the newspaper as the entry point for news consumption. Already, half of college graduates attend more than one school before graduation. (support) Soon you'll see more Web sites that make it easy to take classes from a blend of different universities.

(support) Because the current college system, like the newspaper industry, has built-in redundancies, new Internet efficiencies will lead to fewer researchers and professors. Every major paper once had a bureau in, say, Sarajevo -- now, a few foreign correspondents' pieces are used in dozens of papers. Similarly, at noon on any given day, hundreds of university professors are teaching introductory Sociology 101. The Internet makes it harder to justify these redundancies. In the future, a handful of Soc. 101 lectures will be videotaped and taught across the United States.

When this happens -- be it in 10 years or 20 -- we will see a structural disintegration in the academy akin to that in newspapers now. The typical 2030 faculty will likely be a collection of adjuncts alone in their apartments, using recycled syllabuses and administering multiple-choice tests from afar.

(support) Not all colleges will be similarly affected. Like the New York Times, the elite schools play a unique role in our society, and so they can probably persist with elements of their old revenue model longer than their lesser-known competitors. Schools with state funding will be as immune as their budgets. But within the next 40 years, the majority of brick-and-mortar universities will probably find partnerships with other kinds of services, or close their doors.

So how should we think about this? *(thesis/argument concluded)* Students who would never have had access to great courses or minds are already able to find learning online that was unimaginable in the last century. But unless we make a strong commitment to even greater funding of higher education, the institutions that have allowed for academic freedom, communal learning, unpressured research and intellectual risk-taking are themselves at risk.

If the mainstream of "college teaching" becomes a set of atomistic, underpaid adjuncts, we'll lose a precious academic tradition that is not easily replaced.

mini-essay commenting on the editorial (students can also rebut, if they choose)

Shared Syllabi? What About Copyrights?

According to *The Washington Post*, my job may be in danger, or in demand. I'm a full-time "continuing contract" (read "tenured") community college English instructor who teaches in the classroom and online, which is good, even cutting edge, the newspaper implied. In "A Virtual Revolution Is Brewing for Colleges" by Zephyr Teachout, the horizon for higher education forecasts considerable change. If Teachout (possibly the journalists real name?) is correct, colleges will reduce the number of full-time faculty even further. In the future, a few instructors will teach many students in a national spider-web of virtual connections crossing coast to coast. This arrangement will erase the boundaries between today's numerous institutions. As a result, the days are numbers for many of the nation's present schools because there is so much redundancy in the marketplace. Like newspapers, colleges will condense and consolidate with other businesses or go out of business. In an online environment coming soon to a neighborhood near you, says the editorial, low paid adjuncts will use "recycled syllabuses." Claims Teachout (which *cannot* be a real name), "The typical 2030 faculty will likely be a collection of adjuncts alone in their apartments, using recycled syllabuses and administering multiple-choice tests from afar."

One becomes accustom to the lightning speed of change or dies but "whose syllabi?" I must ask. And, "Will the creator be duly compensated? Or will schools reap all the profits?" I have concerns. I spend a lot of time putting together the course materials I use with my students, perhaps more time and perhaps even more, dare I say, dedication and talent than some of my peers at my institution and elsewhere. *(thesis/commentary)* **The online revolution may make finally clear that teachers are competitors with unequal skills. More talented teachers should be paid more, just like more talented athletes and lawyers.** (The faculty association to which I pay union dues would not be pleased.)

Lesson planning has changed dramatically since I was a student. As a writing teacher, my work is never done. After the week's riverflow of student papers are commented upon and graded, there's always the need to update a Powerpoint's hyperlink, add social media opportunities to one's website or simply check in with student e-mail. Institutions, which tend to be static and slow to change, are challenged by the need to keep up with the speed of technological advancement. At my school, there's tech training in new media and tech help in case of breakdowns, but no help available for the most time-consuming aspect of teaching today: creating and maintaining multi-media materials complete with pretty pictures and slick layout to capture and hold attention. In 2009, conscientious teaching takes oodles more time than writing out old fashion lecture notes, which traditional teachers have been known to cling to for decades.

In 2029, is there a chance my course design will be made available to thousands, even millions of students?

Tenured teachers tend to earn more the longer they teach, whether they improve or not. Forty-six years old now, I may regret these words later: I look forward to these changes caused by the intersection of internet and commerce, if they mean my dedication will result in commensurate compensation.

Works Cited:

Teachout, Zephyr. "A Virtual Revolution is Brewing for Colleges." *The Washington Post*. Web. 13 Sept. 2009.