

## CHAPTER 12

# SEEING IS BELIEVING: RE-PRESENTATION, COGNITION, AND TRANSFER IN WRITING CLASSES

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Transfer, as a cognitive process that recognizes the interrelations of genres, is really an act of seeing (Nowacek, 2011). It describes the recognizing of similarities between contexts, which means seeing the boundaries between contexts as constructed, malleable, and fluid (Tuomi-Gröhn, Egenström, & Young, 2003). Transfer is the making and remaking of boundaries in ways that make them capable of being transgressed. As an example, consider the boundaries between a learning context, such as a FYC course and a novel context such as a history course. To transfer from the former to the latter would require the ability to see similarity between those contexts, meaning one would need to conceive of the boundary between them as transgress-able rather than impenetrable—if one conceives of a boundary between them at all. Of course, some writers see more similarity than others, which means transfer isn't simply a matter of innate similarity between learning contexts and novel contexts but a matter of one's ability to *see* similarity between contexts. To teach for transfer, then, is to teach a particular way of seeing, a way that comes as the result of malleable and transgress-able cognitive boundaries.

Writing-related transfer theorists often discuss the boundaries between contexts, disciplines, and genres, but rarely the cognitive boundaries within individuals. But a conception of cognition as socially situated acknowledges the fact that boundaries that exist socially exist within individuals, as well, as a result of our intertextual nature (Fleckenstein, 1999). These boundaries impact the seeing of individuals and thus, impact the capacity to transfer. In fact, the boundaries between writing contexts are easily conceived of as boundaries within individuals rather than objective boundaries in the social landscape. Mark Johnson (1987) referred to the boundaries that make up our seeing as “image schemata,” the cognitive blue prints people use to make meaning of and give meaning to

the world. Terttu Tuomi-Gröhn, Yrjö Engeström, and Michael Young (2003) argued that transfer should be conceived primarily as an act of boundary-crossing and believed that transfer necessitates “significant cognitive retooling” (p. 4). Rigid, solid boundaries, which resist manipulation and transgression, inhibit transfer, while malleable boundaries make transfer possible and engender a type of seeing that views new contexts in terms of potential similarities rather than objective differences.

Writing-related transfer research often discusses the importance of the ability to see similarity between contexts, which is really the ability to make cognitive boundaries malleable. Scholars commonly hold that writers who transfer do so because they can see similarities between contexts, while those who do not fail to see similarities. In a study of dispositional thinking, David N. Perkins, Shari Tishman, Ron Ritchhart, Kiki Donis, and Al Andrade (2000) found sensitivity, defined as the ability to notice occasions to enact a behavior, to be the most important aspect of engaging thinking dispositions. David W. Smit (2004) noted that “expert writers learn to see analogies, to see similarities and differences between old and new genres and old and new contexts; novices don’t often recognize the similarities between old and new genres and contexts in order to apply what they do know” (p. 134). More recent studies complicated Smit’s ideas a bit by finding that students sometimes see similarities and the opportunity to transfer but don’t find it necessary to meet their goals (Wardle, 2007, p. 73), or they see similarities and transfer but are unable to successfully show their transfer (Nowacek, 2011). Still, writing-related transfer theorists agree that the ability to see similarity is the primary determinate of transfer. With this, they are implicitly viewing difference and similarity not as separate and objective states, but as symbiotic ways of seeing that conceive of difference as the potential for similarity and similarity as the potential for difference.

If this seems odd, that’s because it is—by modern standards anyway. And really, modern standards and modern ways of seeing lie at the heart of transfer as an issue. Anthony Giddens (1990) defined modernity at its simplest as, “modes of social life or organisation which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence” (loc. 79). Giddens went on to explain that though capitalism and industrialization are primary focal points for many scholars of modernity, rationality is the “keynote” underlying the major theories of modernity (Giddens, 1990, loc. 212). Modern organizational schemata, with rationality, efficiency, and production as their driving logics, gave rise to the issue of transfer in the first place when modern society and modern universities became increasingly divided into specialized disciplines with specialized genres (Russell, 1991). A conception of transfer that pushes into paradoxical understandings of simi-

larity and difference and malleable cognitive schemata contradicts modernity's emphasis on rationality. Modern society organizes itself in terms of rationality, making similarity and difference wholly separate so that things do not contradict themselves. This increases efficiency and decreases dissonance, which aids the modernist push toward universal order and control (Holton & Turner, 1989, p. 69). Modernity is based in rationality and cannot abide irrational constructs, which is problematic for transfer and any conception of learning that acknowledges the importance of cognitive dissonance. Transfer is the transformation of boundaries so that which was once different might become similar, i.e., what was once a part of a foreign context can be made a part of the subject via its similarity to previous contexts. A wholly modern mind is likely to see a novel context as objectively different and refrain from disturbing the cognitive boundaries that prevent transfer.

In its quest to rationally order society, and the individuals who make it up, modernity turns to the modern spectacle as its tool. The modern spectacle, as defined by Guy Debord (1983), is a force of modernity that works to order and reorder human experience and relationships through mediating images. What might have been a face-to-face conversation becomes an email chain. What might have been a dialogue about the expectations of an assignment becomes an assignment sheet or a writing prompt. What might have been a conversation about the genre conventions typical in a given discipline becomes a stack of model texts. David R. Russell (1991) saw the increase in disciplinary divide as correlated to the increase in mediated relationships in American work places (p. 4). This makes mediation a key component of human relationships or as Debord put it, "The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images" (1983, section 4). The modern spectacle demands a relationship of boundaries that both connect and disconnect, severing the wholeness of human experience and replacing it with the efficiency and static opacity of mediation. It reorders society as a series of mediated relationships, in which "Everything that was directly lived has moved away into representation" (Debord, 1983, section 1). Debord's absolutism may be hyperbolic, but in a world inundated with mediating images—much more so than in Debord's time—the presence of the modern spectacle is as apparent as the screen sitting in everyone's pockets, and it is the modern spectacle that develops a social schema of division, separation, and solidity internalized by individuals.

A society ordered by the modern spectacle works in the interest of modernity and can help achieve many aims modern society deems positive. Not only does it increase a certain type of efficiency—both cognitively and socially—it also provides a certain type of access. Establishing a boundary disconnects two entities, but it also connects them in certain ways, as those entities now share

a boundary. Consider the proliferation of online education as an example. It provides access to education for those who may not otherwise have it by solving certain resource issues. It simultaneously connects people who are separated by geography while placing a boundary between them. Online education connects people in a certain way even if it doesn't provide the type of education many writing instructors feel is vital, one based on the human interaction felt in the classroom. Walter Benjamin (1939/2003) considered a similar issue in work on the impact of cinema. He wrote that cinema, unlike theater, replaces the eye of the audience member with the eye of the camera. Someone watching a film is not empathizing with the actor or the character being portrayed but rather is empathizing with the camera (pp. 259-260). The mediating image, the representation, fragments the wholeness of this human experience, and as a result, an experience that was once dynamic is made static. Or, as Baz Kershaw (2003) put it, "it [spectacle] deals with the human in inhuman ways" (p. 594).

Debord (1983) and Benjamin (1939/2003) focused on the social and political implications of spectacle, an important issue for educators—and especially writing teachers—to take up. But there's a second implication of their work that is often ignored—the impact of the modern spectacle on individual cognition. If we live in a society of spectacle, as Debord insisted we do, surely it impacts our individual cognition. Fleckenstein (1999) argued for a conception of individuals she termed the "somatic mind," "mind and body as a permeable, intertextual territory that is continually made and remade" (p. 281). This is supported by Johnson's (1987) conception of the body—and its relation to the physical world—as integral to the making and remaking of image schemata. What Fleckenstein's and Johnson's work tells us is that what exists in our social and physical realities is internalized as the blueprints of our cognition; our corporeal interaction makes and remakes our cognitive schemata. The modern spectacle, as a force that orders our social relations with mediating images, is a schema built of static boundaries. Mediating images have no agency; they are not malleable; they cannot manipulate themselves. I submit that in a society of spectacle, internalized cognitive boundaries—image schemata—are less malleable, less fluid, and less transgress-able than they might otherwise be.

Robert Kegan (1994) attempted to describe the demand modernity places on the cognition of individuals. In doing so, he describes a traditional view of one's consciousness as solidified and concrete as second-order consciousness. As part of our second-order consciousness, we develop a solidified sense of self, a distinction from others, and a sense that things may be grouped together in classes or sets he called "durable categories" (Kegan, 1994, pp. 21-23). This model explains the way in which we recognize and understand the distinctness of genres. The next phase of our development (third-order consciousness), the

one many adults ask adolescents to take on and the one teachers ask students to take on when they ask them to transfer, Kegan associated with the development of “cross-categorical knowing,” the ability to understand one’s self as a durable category in relation other durable categories—people, groups, communities, disciplines (1994, pp. 24-25). Kegan, like Johnson, saw orders of consciousness as ways of ordering and making meaning of one’s experiences. He viewed “abstraction” and “generalization”—terms often used in place of transfer—as an act of third-order consciousness, and though his view would see a lack of transfer as the lack of development of third-order consciousness. Kegan attaches third-order consciousness to modernism; however, I would argue that elements of modernity, such as the modern spectacle, inhibit cross-categorical knowing and the development of third-order consciousness by encouraging the internalization of impermeable boundaries. Although it’s true that third-order consciousness often develops as people age, Kegan makes clear that it does not occur automatically and is highly contextual. Instead, it is either prompted or not by social influences, and the factors of our highly mediated world often allow people to remain within the boundaries of the second order.

The modern spectacle impacts the formation of our image schemata. It shapes our cognition in such a way that makes boundaries less malleable, less bothered to consider contradiction, more determined to quiet dissonance. We see and make meaning through a modernist lens meant to work most efficiently, an ideal measured by standards of efficiency constructed by modern logics. The modern mind sees with eyes trained to look most efficiently, and the most efficient way to interact with a novel context is to not interact with it at all or to interact with it in a representational and efficient way. To interact representationally does not require full engagement; it doesn’t require someone to consider a novel context in relation to who they are; it simply demands that someone consider what they can represent. I’m always struck when students speak of writing instruction as if the goal is to find the correct codes to place in a text and get a particular grade. Modernity—and the internalized perspective of the modern spectacle—encourages this view, what Elizabeth Wardle (2012) calls an “answer-getting” disposition. It’s much less efficient—much harder—to connect a novel context with one’s identity and open the potential for transfer. Writing teachers see this daily, as they see students who never attempt to see the ways in which writing might share similarities with other aspects of their lives, the ways in which writing already is a part of their daily lives. Instead, many students are simply looking for the codes necessary to please the teacher and earn a certain grade.

Playing their part in the modern spectacle, teachers construct mediating images to make this work more smoothly—grading rubrics, assignment sheets, and model texts. Students may transfer some base knowledge and skills attached

to their identity as a literate person or the components necessary to interact representationally, but they too rarely look beyond what they need to interact at a representational level. This is not meant as a condemnation of students' and teachers' ways of seeing; a condemnation of modern people for having modern ways of seeing makes no sense and neglects the ways in which everyone—myself included—is complicit in the forces of modernity. Rather, it is an explanation of why people within our modern society of spectacle tend to interact in the ways they do with novel contexts. Novice writers struggle to see similarity because our modernist gaze has us seeing new contexts through the internalized lens of the modern spectacle. This lens makes transfer very difficult, especially the transfer of dispositions and habits of mind, because our cognitive boundaries are not malleable enough to transfer. The boundaries between contexts, which are really boundaries within us, remain solid, fixed, rigid, and often unnoticed.

## TRANSFER IN THE AGE OF SPECTACLE

Because early scholarship on writing-related transfer was an outgrowth of genre studies, it conceptualized writing-related transfer as an issue of genres and the inherent differences between them and focused more heavily on the social aspect of cognition. Genre and transfer scholars were exploring the realization that most of what was taught in FYC courses, or general writing skills instruction, was never transferred to other disciplines (Petraglia, 1995; Russell, 1995). From this inquiry, genre theory developed a new conception that understands genre as socially situated, culturally and ideologically influenced, momentarily stable, and continually evolving (Bazerman, 1988; Devitt, 2004; Smit, 2004). Russell (1995) characterized the issues of genre through the use of activity theory, and as Jessie Moore (2012) made clear, writing-related transfer research is typically focused on one of the three components of an activity system: subject, meditational means, and object(ive). Russell's ultimate conclusion, as well as Smit's, is that significant transfer of the knowledge and skills often taught in FYC is not likely because genres arise as part of their specific activity systems. The conditions of those systems cannot be recreated outside of them, and even if they could, writing teachers could never hope to learn the specifics of so many different activity systems.

Early writing-related transfer scholarship, heavily influenced by genre studies, locates transfer primarily as a social act. It is based in a social cognitive theory that saw transfer as entirely dependent on the similarity between learned and novel contexts (Bransford, Pellegrino, & Donovan, 2000). Under this conception, contexts are objectively similar or dissimilar, and transfer will or won't occur based on their similarity. This places the locus of transfer outside the individual and locates

it within the context. As a result of this social-epistemic view, early writing-related transfer theorists focused heavily on the social elements of activity theory—the meditational means and the object(ive)—rather than the subject as an individual. To study transfer at this time was to study the ways in which students construct meditational means to meet objectives. Transfer research was less focused on the individual’s orientation to the object(ive) itself or how the individual felt about or identified with the object(ive). Individual cognition was subsumed under socially situated cognition, which echoes Debord’s (1983) notion that the modern spectacle makes the individual invisible within the social.

As a consequence of its preoccupation with meditational means and object(ive)s, writing-related transfer scholarship often focuses primarily on the transfer of knowledge and skills (Driscoll & Wells, 2012), elements that are more easily represented via mediating images than dispositions, habits of mind, motivations, identity, or values. Though genre theory acknowledges the human elements that give rise to genres, it subsumes the individual within the social, and the objects of sociality and the means by which the individual is social—the representations of the individual’s knowledge and skills—become the focus of study. Put simply, genre studies understands the importance of the subject in the creation of genres, but transfer theorists still focus primarily on what is more capable of being represented—knowledge and skills. Much of the research associated with meditational means and object(ive)s comes from 2007 or earlier, while none of the research focused on the subject as an individual comes from before that point (Moore, 2012).

A shift toward a look into the subject as an individual began in 2007 when Wardle included dispositions as a part of her inquiry into transfer. Her inclusion of dispositions was at the forefront of emerging scholarship that views transfer as an “individual act of cognition” (Nowacek, 2011, p. 29). Since then, scholarship from Wardle (2009, 2012), Mary Jo Reiff and Anis Bawarshi (2011), Nowacek (2011), and Dana Lynn Driscoll and Jennifer Wells (2012) spoke to the notion that learners’ dispositions and habits of mind are essential components of transfer. Intuitively, this makes sense. Those who orient themselves to a given context in negative ways (dispositions) are unlikely to enact the positive habits of mind necessary to transfer. The National Council of Teachers of English, Council of Writing Program Administrators, and National Writing Project’s *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (2011) identified openness as an important habit of mind for success in post-secondary writing; Arthur L. Costa (2008) identified it as an important habit of mind for success generally. It’s hard to imagine someone transferring all the useful knowledge and skills possible if they have not first transferred openness to a given context . . . or curiosity . . . or persistence. Without the enactment of certain habits of mind, certain knowledge and skills

will be left behind. And it's hard to imagine someone being open, curious, or persistent if they do not first have certain dispositions that might enact those habits. Students who display what Wardle (2012) called an "answer-getting" disposition aren't likely to enact curiosity in contexts toward which they have an answer-getting disposition. As a result, they are unlikely to engage the knowledge and skills curiosity often engages: good question asking, good critical thought, good research skills, etc.

Different writing-related transfer researchers have identified different dispositions important to transfer. Reiff and Bawarshi (2011) identified "boundary-guarding" and "boundary-crossing" students (p. 325), with boundary-crossers being students who engage in deliberate transfer of prior genre knowledge and boundary-protectors accidentally transferring prior genre knowledge with greater potential for negative transfer. Wardle (2012) identified students as having "problem-exploring" and "answer-getting" dispositions. Those with answer-getting dispositions want the answer quickly and efficiently; they are less open to curiosity, exploration, or multiple answers and perspectives. Those with problem-exploring dispositions are curious, reflective and willing to engage with multiple possibilities. Wardle added that formal education in the United States—an education system steeped in the modern spectacle—encourages and fosters answer-getting dispositions. The most extensive look at dispositions that help facilitate writing-related transfer came from Driscoll and Wells (2012) who identified four dispositions important to writing-related transfer: expectancy-value, self-efficacy, attribution, and self-regulation. Expectancy-value is the belief that one will obtain some value from a given context. Self-efficacy is the belief that one can be effective in a given context. Attribution is the belief that outcomes are the result of one's actions. And self-regulation is the ability to set goals and regulate one's path toward those goals—essentially, the ability to remain disciplined. Whether or not these dispositions—and not some others—are *the* dispositions necessary for writing-related transfer is still unknown, but they seem, at the very least, to be a good start at understanding what dispositions must be brought to a given context in order to facilitate greater transfer of knowledge and skills.

Although recent research in writing-related transfer has focused on dispositions, researchers have yet to dig into habits of mind that might facilitate transfer or be transferred. In part, this is because it's difficult to distinguish between dispositions and habits of mind; they are not exactly the same things, but they aren't wholly different. In fact, Driscoll and Wells (2012) listed some dispositions Costa (2008) considered habits of mind; which is to say, no one has constructed a definitive list of dispositions and habits of mind or clearly distinguished between the two. As I see it, dispositions are the way people orient themselves to



a given context. They are not the content of learning, but they help facilitate learning and the application of learning (Driscoll & Wells, 2012). Habits of mind are more active. Because of that, I conceive of habits of mind as the enactment of different dispositions. Habits of mind happen as a result of a person's disposition. For example, a person with a problem-exploring disposition relative to a given context is curious about that context. Curiosity is the habit of mind enacted by those with a problem-exploring disposition. Both occur as part of our cognition, but I view one (habits of mind) as a result of the other (dispositions).

The society individuals inhabit impacts their dispositions and habits of mind, as it does all cognitive functions. Our somatic minds are an intertextual territory made and remade as the result of our interaction with the world. In a society of spectacle, our somatic minds—and the image schemata of them—are constructed for solidity and rigidity, not malleability and transgression. Wardle (2012) implicated formal education in the production of students with answer-getting dispositions, but formal education is just a reflection of the society that created it. The modern spectacle shapes our seeing—our cognition—in a way that cultivates dispositions and habits of mind conducive to the internalized schema of the modern spectacle. That means more students with answer-getting and boundary-protecting dispositions. It means an expectancy-value based solely on modernist ideals like career goals and economic achievement, as Driscoll and Wells' student Julie expressed. And it means students who see representations of ability (grades) as the ultimate goal, not the type of engagement necessary for transfer, learning, or success in post-secondary writing, as Wardle (2007, p. 73) found.

Two primary solutions emerged as a result of the early inquiry into genres and transfer. 1) Scholars encouraged universities to construct and support WID programs (Beaufort, 2007; Russell, 1995; Smit, 2004). This approach respects the differences between genres and the disciplines that construct them and relieves writing teachers from their un-tenable roles as multi-disciplinary experts. 2) Scholars encouraged writing programs to teach rhetorical knowledge and/or meta-knowledge about writing (Russell, 1995; Wardle, 2009). This approach sees possibility for rhetorical knowledge and meta-knowledge to transfer in useful ways and gives writers a language with which they can discuss writing in all genres. Both of these are sensible approaches. But with recent evidence on the importance of dispositions and habits of mind to successful transfer and success in post-secondary writing, it's important to develop a dispositional model of teaching for transfer. In the final section, I build on existing models of teaching for transfer to construct a model meant to facilitate the transfer of the dispositions and habits of mind necessary with particular attention to the subversion of the modern spectacle.

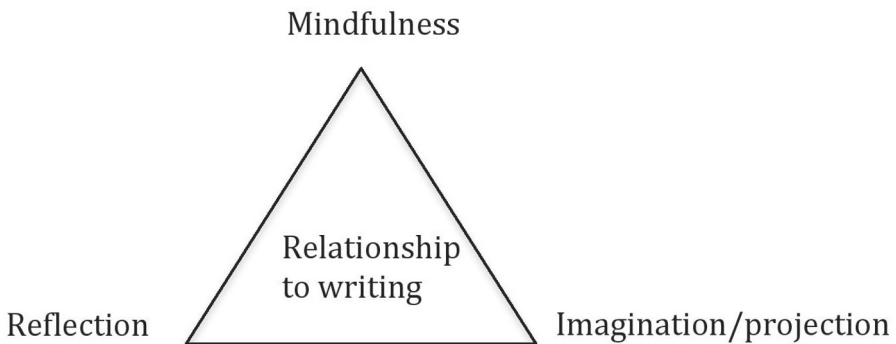
## A DISPOSITIONAL MODEL OF TEACHING FOR TRANSFER

A model of teaching for transfer must work to subvert the impact of the modern spectacle, which means working to make and remake cognitive boundaries (image schemata) in ways that make them more malleable, more capable of being transformed and transgressed. To do this, writing teachers must ask students to confront the boundaries that exist within them. They must ask students to reflect on their past relationships with writing, understand their current writing selves, and imagine their writing futures. Smit (2004) explained that expert writers see analogies between genres and contexts, a position supported by Perkins et al. (2000). Writing teachers interested in teaching for transfer must teach novice writers to see as experienced writers see, to be sensitive to analogies between genres and contexts. This means writing teachers must teach students to engage certain dispositions and habits of mind in writing contexts, ones that are more conducive to seeing analogies. In essence, a dispositional model of teaching for transfer teaches students *to be* writers as opposed to teaching them *how to* write or *about* writing. Or rather, it teaches them to understand themselves as part of the constant process of becoming that is being a writer. This form of being engenders a way of seeing that transgresses the boundaries between contexts and within individuals. It accepts pluralism and embraces inquiry. Basically, it holds the dispositions identified as important for writers by writing-related transfer researchers and enacts all the habits of mind listed in the *Framework's* statement.

Current models of teaching for transfer understand the importance of seeing. Nowacek (2011) introduced the idea of teaching students to become “agents of integration,” which she defined as students capable of both perceiving and conveying to others the connections between contexts (p. 38). Nowacek’s model addresses the difficulties of asking students to transfer within highly specialized universities with structures that often discourage transfer. As a result, she developed a framework based on “seeing” and “showing.” Students who could both see the opportunity for transfer and show that they had made that connection would be agents of integration (2011, p. 40). While I agree with Nowacek’s assertion that seeing is the key to transfer, and I think her findings on the importance of identity in transfer are particularly impactful, I believe her interest in “showing” as a key to being an agent of integration may undermine the type of seeing necessary for transfer. Nowacek’s model serves as a middle-ground that allows students to meet the demands of modern institutions while recognizing the interrelations of genres (transferring), but never considers that those demands—the necessity to show—might be what’s undermining transfer in the first place. An institution built on the modern spectacle encourages students to interact representationally and holds a view of intelligence based entirely

on ability that can be represented (knowledge and skills) rather than a view of intelligence that includes dispositions, values, motivations, identity, etc. Consequently, the completion of writing tasks—the showing—becomes an act of finding the right combination of symbols within that activity system rather than engaging dispositions necessary to make connections and significantly transfer.

Kathleen Blake Yancey, Liane Robertson, and Kara Taczak (2014) developed a model of teaching for transfer that asks students to reflect in ways that might connect knowledge and skills from prior contexts to novel contexts. In doing this, they attempt to address the ways in which students see both their prior experiences and their current contexts. This model relies heavily on structured reflection and the development of meta-cognition through the teaching of key terms and concepts. It is heavily influenced by research from Wardle (2009) and the importance of teaching students “about writing” (p. 782). Although the Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak model of teaching for transfer fosters meta-cognition, an important aspect of transfer, its emphasis on reflection provides opportunities only to see the past, and it’s not clear how this is meant to help writers see similarity moving forward, though it seems Yancey et al. are cognizant of the importance of attempting to cultivate a way of seeing new contexts, as they included a prompt in their final assignment that asks students to imagine a future in which their new theory of writing might be applied (2014, p. 75). Still, Yancey et al. focused heavily on the transfer of knowledge and skills.



*Figure 12.1. Model derived from Nowacek and from Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak.*

Models from Nowacek (2011) and Yancey et al. (2014), while they have certain components that address cognitive orientations that prevent transfer, do not fully confront and address these orientations. They touch on practices like reflection, but never put together a method that acknowledges the important role dispositions and habits of mind play in the reshaping of boundaries. I propose a model that builds on those from Nowacek (2011) and Yancey et al. and asks stu-

dents to explore their relationship to writing, what constructed it, what impacts it currently, and what it might look like in the future, in order to increase their sensitivity to seeing analogies. This model asks students to consider their dispositions and habits of mind, but more importantly it asks them to see as writers see and to understand that they are writers and they will always be writers; it is simply up to them to craft their conception of themselves as writers. This model is based on the incorporation of three components centered on the students' relationships with writing: reflection, mindfulness, and imagination or projection.

These components, taken as a whole, provide the opportunity to trace the history of students' dispositions and habits of mind related to writing, analyze their current dispositions and habits of mind related to writing, and image potential future dispositions and habits of mind related to writing. This model is built on an understanding of past, present, and future as inherently linked and repositions the locus of transfer within the individual. It calls for a comprehensive look at the social factors that crafted their relationship to writing and allows them to imagine multiple futures in which their relationship could be different. Most importantly, though, it asks students to see as writers see by reflecting on the elements that constructed the current moment, analyzing the conditions of the current moment, and imagining potential futures in which elements of the current moment and past moments will re-emerge.

Each of these components has a place in this model for a specific reason and both reflection (Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak, 2014) and mindfulness (Perkins et al., 2000) have been explored as components of teaching for transfer or dispositional thinking before.

## REFLECTION

Yancey et al. (2014) found that student transfer is often based on access to prior knowledge and what they call the students' "point of departure," meaning where students are and how they see themselves as writers based on previous feedback from others. They pointed to the importance of reflection as a way to access prior knowledge that might be useful to current contexts and used reflection as a key practice of their "Teaching for Transfer" course. The notion of a "point of departure" implies that being a writer is a state of being that's constantly in flux, and Yancey et al. conceptualize useful reflection as cognizant of that constructed nature of that point. This is the key to the type of reflection, which Yancey et al. reiterate in their contributions to this collection as well. Many students are given feedback like grades and as a result develop dispositions toward writing contexts that inhibit transfer and learning. A reflection of one's past relationship with writing needs to see writing identities, or "points of departure" not as where

the student definitively is or was, but as a position the student occupied within a particular activity system—high school or grade school or social media. It's important to a dispositional model of teaching for transfer that reflection be the act of understanding the past and present as subjective and constructed rather than objective and fixed.

## **MINDFULNESS**

Mindfulness sometimes takes on a connotation of the spiritual or mythical, but I use the term as nearly synonymous with awareness. As I see it, mindfulness is the capacity to understand all the things that make up a context, to be in the moment in a way that sees the past and future as joined in the present. This means seeing old and new contexts as joined within one's individual experience. As Perkins et al. (2000) explained, "Mindfulness is associated with a sense of personal agency and efficacy as well as a belief in a constructed and conditional reality, whereas mindlessness is more associated with a commitment to absolutes" (p. 284). For these reasons, mindfulness is a key component to a dispositional theory of teaching for transfer. The sense of agency mindfulness gives students to construct their realities is a key component in seeing contexts as conditional and thus seeing analogies.

## **IMAGINATION/PROJECTION**

Johnson (1987) identified imagination as the force that makes and remakes our cognitive schemata, meaning it has an outsized role to play in transfer. Imagination, as he sees it, gives coherence to our cognition by shaping and ordering cognitive schemata in useful ways. It is the bridge between our bodied experience and our cognitive order. It allows us to make connections to novel contexts, as it "gives us image-schematic structures and metaphoric and metonymic patterns by which we can extend and elaborate those schemata" (Johnson, 1987, p. 169). Imagination, then, is that thing that determines the malleability of our cognitive schemata—our internal boundaries. Johnson's theory of imagination is important to conceptions of transfer because it understands the role of projection in creating "novel meaning" (1987, p. 165). To see analogies is to draw connections between previous contexts and novel contexts; this is a projection of one's self—experiences, knowledge, skills, dispositions, habits of mind—into a new context to make connections. Without imagination—without the ability or inclination to project into new contexts—analogies remain unseen. Put simply, we may be able to chalk up an inability to transfer to a lack of imagination.

A dispositional model of teaching for transfer may be enacted in different

ways, as long as it includes aspects of the three components and an explanation of how they are connected. I have enacted it differently with different classes, using in-class writing and discussion, creative writing exercises, readings and discussion, debates, etc. Another example might be having students consider their own reactions to a newly assigned writing project in the moment of having those reactions and discussing those feelings, what made them, and where they might lead. What's most important is that the teacher be mindful when implementing the model, as well. It would be easy to implement it in ways that undermine its effectiveness, by relating to students through texts they produce (mediating images). Reflection, mindfulness, and projection mean very little if they're done in ways that are merely representational, merely done to achieve grades. A dispositional model of teaching for transfer is meant to account for the rigid cognition encouraged by modernity and implemented by the modern spectacle. To simply lean on mediating images or downplay the human element in this model's implementation would negate its purpose. When I have students' journal about their previous-day's experience with writing, they do it in class, and then, we discuss it. I never have them turn it in, and make very clear at the beginning of class that it will never receive a grade. I refuse to make this exercise another representational interaction, and I tell them why. When I have them imagine futures for their relationships with writing—sometimes weekly, sometimes less frequently—we discuss those futures, what makes them feel that way about their future, and what another version of that future might look like. We also discuss what it would take to make those futures realities, and I encourage my students to image the wildest, most-outlandish futures they can from time to time because I want them to stretch the boundaries not color within them. Then, we can laugh together when we conceive of a way to make wild, outlandish futures a reality. A dispositional model of teaching for transfer is useless if it is subsumed within the practices of modernity. Each component needs to be undertaken as part of a dialogue that encourages sincerity in the process and a real, human connection based on an inquiry into one's identity.

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