

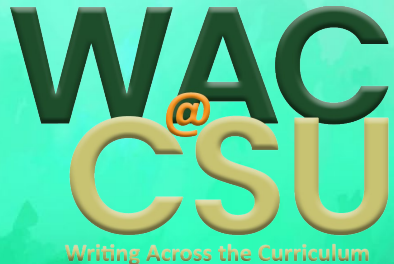
Talking About WAC

Recorded Workshops on Writing
Across the Curriculum

Teaching for Transfer Across the Curriculum

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Agenda

- **Introduction**
- **Transfer Research**
 - History & Context
 - Prior Knowledge
 - Questions
- **Teaching for Transfer (TFT)**
 - Key Terms
 - Reflection
 - Theory of Writing
 - Questions
- **Teaching for Transfer in WAC**
 - Reflection
 - Questions



Introduction



HELLO



Co-editor of *College Composition and Communication (CCC)* w/Matthew Davis

Awards: CCCC Chairs' Memorial Scholarship; CCCC Research Impact Award; CWPA Best Book Award; best article of 2013 for *Composition Studies*

Research: transfer of knowledge and practice; reflection; ePortfolios; wellbeing; dual enrollment

Teaching: Embedded 2 yr. college; private liberal arts; R1 Flagship; HSI; private liberal arts R1; adult education program

First generation; working class

How do I teach students something meaningful that they will use again?

Guiding Questions

- What do we want our students to walk away knowing/understanding? From our classrooms? From our campus?
- How do we help our students become effective communicators?
- How do we give students navigation tools for “success” in the age of intelligence?

History & Context

Transfer of Learning

Transfer Research: Early 1900s

Thorndike and others

- Direct application approach
- Mimicry of Tasks
- Transfer possible in situations with identical elements only

Transfer Research: 1990s

Perkins and Salomon

- Near vs. Far Transfer
- Low-road vs. High-road Transfer
- Negative vs. Positive Transfer
- “Hugging” and “Bridging” (strategies)
- Conditions for transfer can improve
- Deliberate instructional design

Transfer Research: Early 2000s

National Research Council, *How People Learn*

- Expertise conditionalized to context
- Local + general knowledge – context
- Deliberate practice – includes active monitoring
- Building on prior knowledge ideal for transfer but possible negative transfer
- Transfer not an end product but a dynamic process
- Students learn to make strategic choices

Transfer Research: Research on Writing

- Students do not expect their writing knowledge to cross contexts.
- Faculty don't expect students' writing strategies to transfer either.
- Effective first-year writers see themselves as novices and see writing as having a purpose beyond the classroom.
- A conceptual framework of writing knowledge is necessary for transfer.
- Reflection and meta-awareness activities offer bridging structures for students' writing transfer.
- *Readiness for college writing* provides a framework to understand and help student writers transitioning into college writing settings.
- We can teach for transfer.

Transfer Research: Understanding Writing Transfer for Higher Ed

Implications for Transformative Student Learning in Higher Education, edited by Jessie L. Moore & Randy Bass

“While education is based on the broad assumption that what one learns *here* can transfer over *there*—across critical transitions – what do we really know about the transfer of knowledge?”

Question is foundational for higher ed. in the 21st century.

45 researchers from 28 institutions across 5 countries identify enabling practices for encouraging the transfer of writing knowledge and practices that should inform decision-making by all higher ed. stakeholders about how to integrate and promote successful transfer for the students at their institutions.

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What Prevents Transfer?

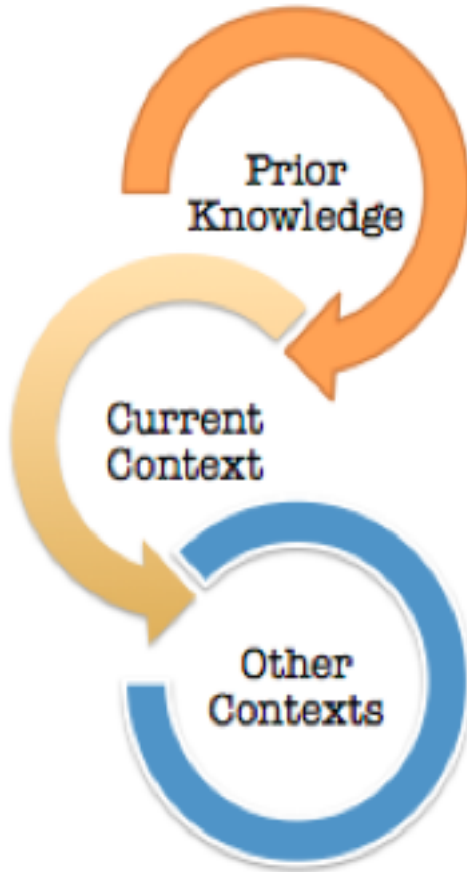
- Dispositions
- Success in HS curriculum where expectations are different than college/disciplines
- Prior Knowledge
- Unwilling to conceptualize
- Resistance

Prior Knowledge

A student's ability to repurpose prior knowledge about current topic/context for new situations.

Also ... it's part of "the prior":

prior knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs students bring into their current situations and that impact existing and new knowledge.



The "prior" impacts students' ability but it also impacts our own ability ...



The potential for (successful) transformative learning takes time

...

and

good company.



You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.

—C.S. Lewis

Prior Knowledge

- **An absence** of prior knowledge relevant to the new situation
- **Assemblage** – graft new knowledge to old
- **Remix** – rework and integrate new knowledge with old successfully
- **Critical Incident** – setback, failed effort causes rethinking of approach; new knowledge and practices

Critical Incident - Rick

- Science major – identity of scientist
- Mindset of experiments = failure = learning
- Not heavily invested in writing identity
- Sees failure as opportunity to set things right
- Can identify as novice

Questions

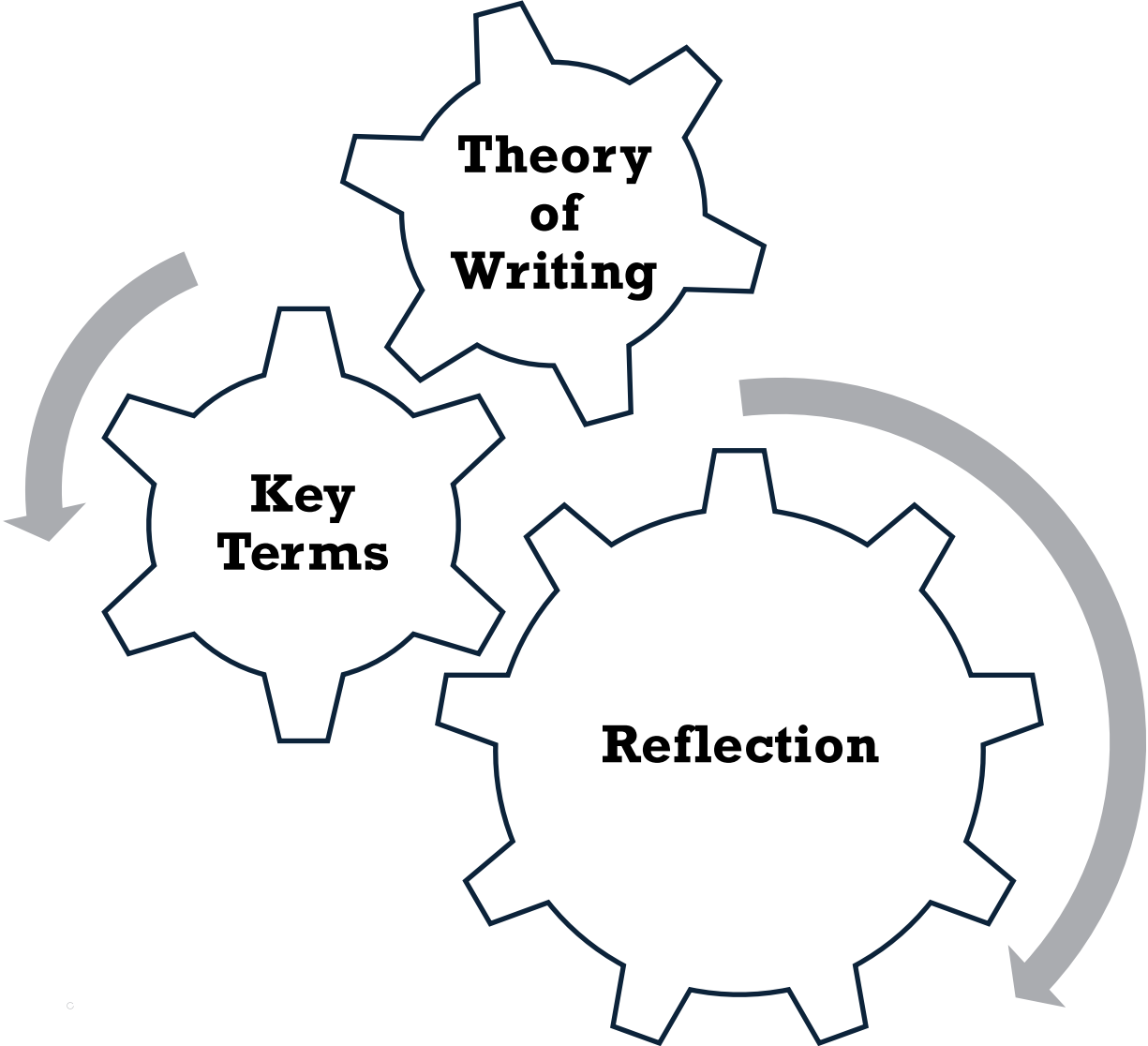
- What kind of questions can you ask to get students thinking about their prior knowledge?
- What will you do with that prior knowledge?

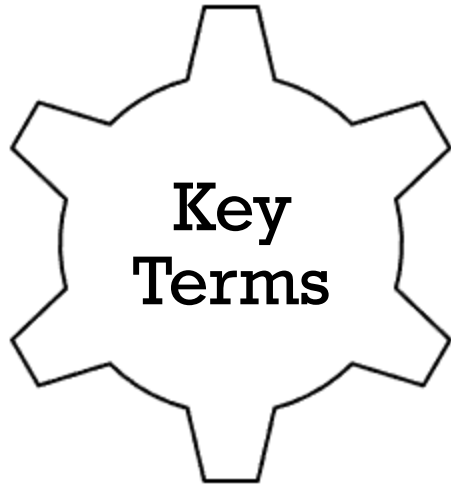


Teaching for Transfer (TFT)

Key Terms, Reflective Framework, & Theory of Writing

Teaching for Transfer





**Rhetorical
Situation**

Audience

Genre

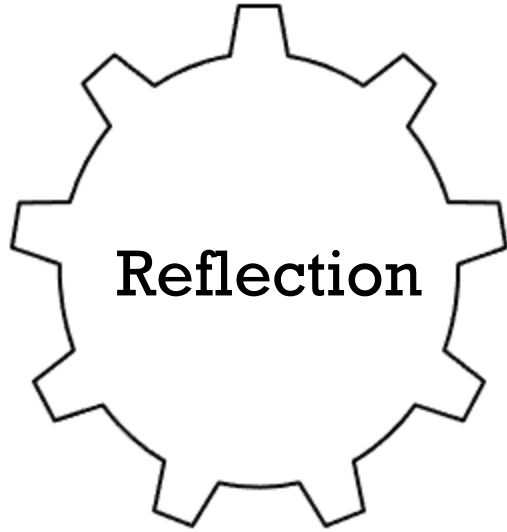
Reflection

Purpose

Knowledge

Context

**Discourse
Community**



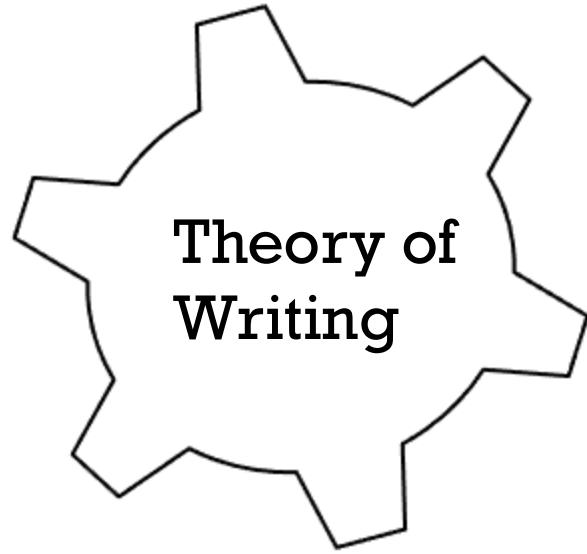
**Reflective
Theory**

**Reflective
Activities**

**Reflective
Assignments**

**Explicit &
Intentional**

**Integrative &
Reiterative**



Students' Individual Theory

Explore what
they do

...and why

Reiterative
Reflective
Process

Space to theorize and develop framework by
reflectively engaging key terms & their writing
experiences

Questions

- Create a list of 5 key terms that define your course?
- What key terms would you expect students to know and understand moving from one class to another?
- Identify 3 writing key terms (from the adjunct list) that seem to fit within your curriculum/class.
- How can the 2 lists “talk to” (or interface) with each other?
- What would students *do* with the key terms?

1. Rhetorical Situation
2. Audience
3. Genre
4. Reflection
5. Context
6. Knowledge
7. Purpose
8. Discourse Community

Teaching for Transfer

Reflective Framework & Explicit Instruction

What is Reflection?

Reflection and reflective practice are the **conceptual webbing** that students use to **generate connections across and through their learning experiences**, and it helps them to expose any potential **barriers** hindering their ability to move effectively forward within those learning experience(s).

Reiterative reflection helps to tap into **prior knowledge and understandings** and ask them to make sense of their current learning experience(s). It puts **the learning squarely on them**, thus, enhancing student agency.

Why?

Because **critical, reiterative reflective** teaches students about themselves as learners and writers (**who they are; what they value; how they understand things**) which in turn teaches them how to be lifelong learners able to flexible and adaptable in new learning and writing situations.



In Practice: A Reflective Framework

an intentional and deliberate practice designed to create/discover meaningful connections between contexts, experiences, and knowledges promoting self-understanding



(1) Reflection is intentional and deliberate.

(2) Students complete reflective assignments and activities designed to discover meaningful and critical connections between/among assignments, courses, experiences, and knowledge.

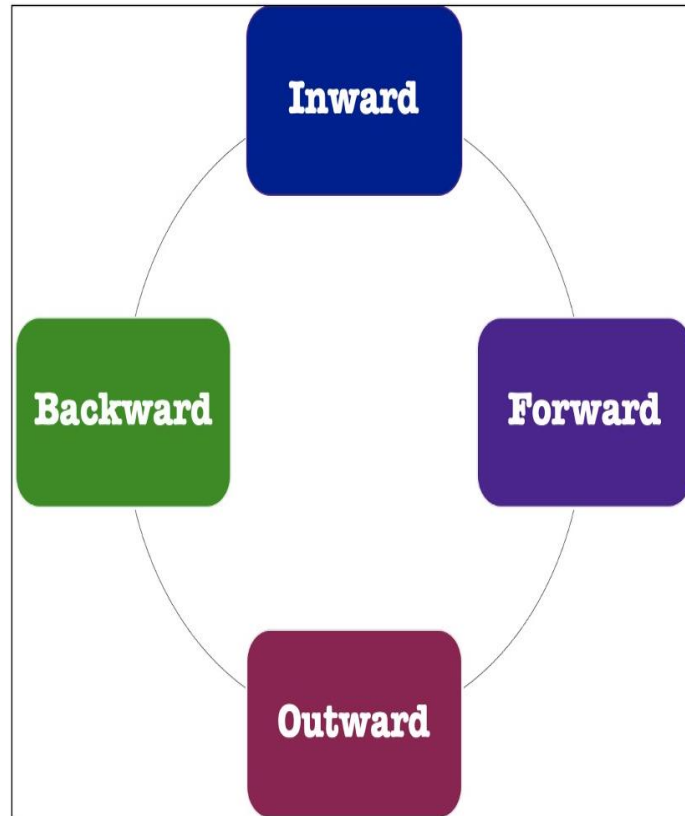
(3) Reflection helps make student learning visible to themselves ...encourages students to take charge of their own education.

A Reflection Framework

Intentional, Systematic, & Reiterative

In Practice

**360-
Degree
Reflection**



- Reflection is intentional and deliberate.
- Students complete reflective assignments and activities designed to discover meaningful and critical connections between/among assignments, courses, experiences, and knowledges.
- Reflection helps make student learning visible to themselves ...encourages students to take charge of their own education.

Reflective Activities & Assignments

Who am I as a writer?

- Letter to Past Self

What do I believe about writing?

- Letter to Future Self

What do I know about writing from prior experiences?

- Theory of Writing

How do I use my current knowledge in different situations?

- Conceptual Maps

Do I learn the same in all situations?

- Story Circles

How can I apply what I learn in this context in another?

- Doodles

- Tactical Activity

- Group Discussion Questions

- Elevator Pitch

Questions

- In what ways is reflection defined in courses for students? And how do they take up that reflective practice?
- How can reflection aid current & future assessment practices?
- How can faculty (across campus) embed reflective practices within their classes alongside their writing assignments?



Teaching for Transfer

- **Be Explicit** – explicit instruction, deliberate goals
- **Build in Expert Practices** – model, illustrate
- **Tap Prior Knowledge** – from tacit to explicit
- **Students create own framework** – mental map
- **Build in Intentional Reflective Practice**
- **Consider students readiness to learn**

Questions

- To make the changes you want to make, what will you do tomorrow?
- What will you do by the end of the semester?
- What will you do by the end of the year?





Thank

you

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