



VIEW TEACHING GUIDES

9. WRITING AND COMMUNICATING

Use these resources when you're teaching your students how to use writing and communication skills to present information appropriately in different situations:

- Academic Writing
- Understanding the Communication Need
- Written Communication
- Preparing for a Presentation
- Writing Help

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The Communication Need

Use this discussion to help students analyze the purpose of communication methods. Begin by having students think about pieces of marketing they have encountered either in person or online. Ask your students to describe an effective example of marketing communication. Use these prompts to encourage analysis:

- What medium was used to communicate (email, print, video)?
- Why was this medium effective in communicating the marketing message?
- What is the central message?
- Who is the target audience?
- Would the message have been as clear if presented using a different medium?

Additionally, you may provide students with a message prompt. Next, ask your students to describe the communication tools they would use to articulate the message most effectively.

The Purpose of Academic Writing

Use this discussion to help students understand their role as academic writers. Begin by asking students to think about the assignments they have completed in their academic careers. Next, ask your students to brainstorm the characteristics and purpose of an academic paper. What differences are they aware of between the types of writing assignments they did in high school versus what they are asked to do in college? Or between different levels of college courses, or different disciplines?

Additionally, you may ask your students to think about their goals as emerging scholars (do they want to publish their work or be recognized as an expert in a given field?). Encourage students to engage with existing scholarship as a jumping off point. This discussion also may kick off a deeper analysis of concepts like publication, peer review, and the scholarly conversation.

Presentation Analysis

Use this activity to help students prepare for a variety of presentation scenarios. Each student will choose a topic and two real-world settings in which they would like to present. For example, a student could choose to present a review on the effects of caffeine on memory. The student then would adapt their presentation scope and depth for two real-world audiences, such as doctors and college students preparing for exams.

Once your students have researched their topic, they should be able to highlight the key topics to present to their target audiences. They also should be able complete the following:

- Structure the presentation in order to best communicate their findings.
- Analyze the most appropriate methods to communicate with their target audiences.
- Determine how the scope and depth of their presentation will be affected by their target audience's needs or familiarity with the topic.
- Select images, charts, or other media to support their findings.

In addition, encourage students to think about how their tone, choice of words, and body language may differ between the two presentations.

ACTIVITY

Analyzing the Scholarly Conversation

Understanding how to contribute effectively to the scholarly conversation is a key skill students should develop throughout their academic careers. Use this activity to help students navigate the scholarly conversation on a topic of their choice. Students should select a topic that interests them and locate at least 3 scholarly sources for analysis. To help your students begin analyzing their sources, use the following prompts:

- What are the common themes present throughout your sources?
- What are the common terms used across your sources?
- Do your sources cite specific researchers, theories, or experiments?

Additionally, you may ask students to scan each source's Discussion or Conclusion to highlight areas of future research. Students then should be able to discuss trends within the field and identify subtopics that emerged from the research.