

**Assessment Day Activity  
September 2013  
Outcome: COMMUNICATION**

What do we want our students to do better in order to communicate more effectively to us?

<p><b>READ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For comprehension</li> <li>• For the discipline</li> <li>• At college level</li> </ul>
<b>PARAPHRASE</b> in a way that shows that they understand the material
<b>VALUE</b> writing effectively in all disciplines (they should <b>CARE</b> )
<p><b>PRESENT ORIGINAL IDEAS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a strong thesis and stick to it</li> <li>• Synthesize</li> <li>• Be coherent</li> <li>• Solve problems</li> <li>• Use professional, formal language (know the audience)</li> <li>• Revise!!</li> <li>• Construct effective arguments</li> </ul>
<b>BE STRONG</b> – in other words, be specific and significant
<b>NON-VERBAL</b> (demonstrate good work ethic)
<b>EDIT</b> (take care of all grammar issues)
<b>USE WORDS</b> more precisely, not “I think...” and “I feel...”
<p><b>MEDIA LITERACY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than just PowerPoint</li> <li>• Communicate professionally in a “tech-savvy” way</li> </ul>
<b>USE CREDIBLE EVIDENCE</b> , incorporate that evidence effectively
<b>DON'T PLAGIARIZE</b> (how can faculty help students learn how not to plagiarize?)
<b>DON'T HALF-PLAGIARIZE EITHER</b>
<b>INFORMATION LITERACY</b>

What are some examples of effective assignments that help students communicate better?

<p><b>ORAL HISTORY PROJECT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use interviews</li> <li>• Develop effective questions (audience awareness)</li> <li>• Connect to history</li> <li>• Write a research paper</li> <li>• Use primary and other sources</li> <li>• Synthesize the information</li> </ul> <p>(In this assignment, students care because they choose a family member or friend to interview for the project, therefore they have an emotional attachment to the topic— affective component)</p>
<p><b>TEACHING/MENTORING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the students teach something</li> <li>• Use both verbal and non-verbal communication</li> <li>• More experienced students help less experienced students succeed (affective component)</li> </ul>
<b>SERVICE REPORTS</b>

- Incorporates a story-telling aspect
- Must contain all necessary information in the event that the “audience” becomes a court of law (in the event of an accident)
- Real-life aspect
- Used for every project
- Students are given a template (example) of a good report

#### **NURSING CARE PLAN**

- Emphasizes conciseness
- Emphasizes audience
- Synthesizes information
- Collecting data/providing sources
- Affect = patient
- Examples of what shows up in court are provided

#### **SELF-REFLECTION**

- Self-assessment
- Requires specific evidence

#### **MAKING THE MOST OF IN-CLASS WRITING** (provided by Mary Leach after the workshop)

##### **A strategy for integrating language, communication, and content learning in your classroom**

Context: This activity can help you cultivate the writing and content skills you want to see your students produce through classroom activities, assessments, exams, papers, summaries, etc. while reviewing content that is important to your discipline. It is most powerful with shorter examples; anything more than a page can get very time consuming.

The process:

1. Have students take out their assignments [these may have been just produced in class or brought from outside of class]. Have them place their work on their desks.
2. Instruct students to mill about the room, read each work, and to star the best example.
3. As your students do this, circulate. Make notice of what examples they star. You might want to be thinking about which one you think is best, why, and why students might identify a different example as best.
4. Once everyone has “voted,” collect the sample with the most stars. You may also want to collect the paper that you think is the best example of what you are looking for in the assignment.
5. Either make copies of each example for the students or use the document camera to project the examples.
6. Have students reflect in writing: why is this example so effective? Share answers through discussion, including your own reasoning. Repeat this step if you are using two or more examples.
7. List effective elements of the examples on the board as they arise in discussion – make sure to clearly express your own expectations.
8. Have students return to their own work and immediately revise. Remind them to use the criteria on the board.
9. If time allows, repeat this entire process with a similar task [e.g., summary of a different textbook section, another descriptive paragraph assignment, etc.]. Encourage students to notice each other’s progress!
10. Under the best circumstances, keep repeating until every student demonstrates that s/he can produce a work that reflects your expectations and standards.

Possible Adaptations:

\*If many students are struggling: pair students and have them work through the process in teams.

\*If you are working on content vocabulary, provide a list of terms that must be accurately incorporated into the writing.

\*Create a checklist of elements of a successful assignment that students can take with them as they work independently.

What effective scaffolding strategies can we use to help students communicate better?

<b>PROVIDE IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK ON VERBAL/NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well are they adjusting to audience?</li><li>• How precisely and accurately are they communicating?</li></ul>
<b>MODEL ENTHUSIASM/WHIMSY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communicate to students that you care</li><li>• Make it relevant to students to encourage them to care</li><li>• Choose topics that evoke passion</li><li>• Respond enthusiastically to student writing</li></ul>
<b>MANDATE VISTS</b> for poor writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• use group sessions to increase efficiency</li></ul>
<b>DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU HAVE READ EVERY SENTENCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Require last-minute proof-reading</li><li>• Require an out-loud reading</li><li>• Require backwards reading</li><li>• Comment on grammar</li><li>• Suggest using the computer to read papers out loud</li><li>• Require a draft (or two)</li></ul>
<b>HAVE STUDENTS READ ALL PAPERS AND STAR THE BEST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use drafts, not final copies</li><li>• Helps them model your thinking</li><li>• Review immediately</li></ul>
<b>USE DOCUMENT COMPARISON</b> function in Word to see where students have made changes (if papers are submitted electronically)
<b>PROVIDE RUBRIC AND SAMPLE PAPER/S</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Particularly useful for technical writing</li><li>• Assignment: grade sample paper (shows understanding of the rubric)</li><li>• Be sure to use a good rather than a poor sample</li></ul>
<b>PROVIDE CONSISTENT AND ONGOING FEEDBACK ON STUDENT WRITING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• email is one way to teach correctness and audience awareness</li><li>• PEF = "Professional email format" – all students should be taught PEF</li></ul>
<b>USE GLOBAL SKILLS RUBRICS</b> to assess student work
<b>USE INFORMATION LITERACY RUBRIC FROM THE LIBRARY</b> when evaluating student work
<b>USE WRITING PROMPTS THAT PROVIDE THE THESIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourages students to find evidence that supports the thesis</li></ul>
<b>USE REPETITION</b> to help concepts sink in <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research suggests that it takes being exposed 7 times for something to stick</li></ul>